

**Devon
Soccer
Association**



Parent/Player Handbook 2021

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Disclaimer All information included in the parent/player handbook is subject to change without notice at the discretion of Devon Soccer Association.

Due to Covid guidelines, it is likely that there may be additional measures required, as well as, last minute changes to schedules and policies, and the requirements of the executive, parents, players, coaches, and referees. Please watch our website for up-to-date information.



OUR CLUB

Welcome to Devon Soccer Association (DSA). We are an outdoor community soccer program for youth ages 2 to 19. DSA is a registered not-for-profit organization which is governed by the Societies Act and operated by a volunteer executive. We are members of Parkland Fun Ball and Soccer League.

Vision Statement

To provide a soccer program to the youth in our community and surrounding area. To encourage and foster the enjoyment of the game of soccer. To develop the skills of both our players and coaches to their full potential.

Meetings

Our Annual General Meeting is held each year between January 1st and March 31st. Elections for our volunteer executive are held at this meeting.

DSA Executive meetings are held regularly throughout the year and any member of the DSA program can attend a DSA Executive meeting as a guest. These guests are invited to speak but have no vote.

Executive and Coordinators

Our executive is here for you! Current Executive members will be listed on our website. If you would like to join our executive or become a coordinator or if you are unsure of who to contact regarding your questions and concerns, please email info@devonsoccer.com to find out.

WHAT IS NEW FOR 2021

DSA executive is proud to announce that we are joining Parkland Fun Ball and Soccer League.

League Objective is FUN!

1. To provide organized participation.
 2. To instill rules and regulations as instituted and voted upon by the communities.
 3. To coordinate scheduling of games for all divisions
 4. TO KEEP OUR LEAGUE FUN!
-
- Lower costs for parents
 - Same great program, with a more relaxed, recreational approach
 - Shorter travel distances (49km to Blueberry compared to 73 km to Breton, for example)
 - Age categories do change and note that cutoffs are ages by February 28, 2021
 - No volunteer or fundraising fees
 - U8 & U10 players will now have a refundable uniform fee so we can reuse jerseys

See website for information pertaining directly to Covid regulations.



REGISTRATION

Online Registration

Online registration is open February 20th to March 15th. Please use the link on our website www.devonsoccer.com to register. Any questions please contact our administrator.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Information Session

February 19, 2021 7:00 pm via Zoom

Fees

Age Category	Fee	Age as of Feb 28th
U4	\$100.00	2,3
U6	\$105.00	4,5
U8	\$110.00	6,7
U10	\$115.00	8,9
U12	\$120.00 + \$40.00 jersey	10,11
U15	\$125.00 + \$40.00 jersey	12,13,14

(All teams are subject to number of registrations and coach availability)

Family Discount

The third and subsequent registrations per family will be reduced by \$30.00/player. See Discount Policy on our website, it is in the About menu.

Late Registrations

Late Registrations may be accepted on and between March 16th and March 25th, if team numbers, coach availability and scheduling permit. A fee of \$50.00/player will be added. Contact administrator to discuss registrations after March 26th, which will be handled case by case, with no guarantee.

Financial Assistance

Kidsport (www.kidsport.ab.ca) and Jumpstart (www.canadiantire.ca/jumpstart) are available for families facing financial hardship. Please contact our administrator in confidence to apply for financial assistance.



Uniforms

U4 and U6 are given a Tim Horton's Timbits t-shirt and soccer socks which the player keeps at the end of the season. Parents are responsible for black shorts, and shin pads which are mandatory. Lace up running shoes are permitted although outdoor soccer cleats are recommended.

U8 and U10 pay a refundable uniform fee of \$50 at the time of registration. Players are given a DSA jersey, shorts, and soccer socks. Uniforms must be returned in clean, good condition on the last night of soccer. Refunds will be issued by July 3, 2021 to the credit card used for registration or by chq for those that pay by e-transfer. Parents are responsible for shin pads (mandatory) and lace up running shoes or outdoor soccer cleats.

U12 and U15 players can reuse, trade, buy or sell used current issue jerseys, if their jersey number is recorded at time of registration. For those without a jersey, parents will purchase a current issue DSA jersey and shorts which the player keeps at the end of the season. Players/Parents are responsible to keep jerseys clean and in good repair. Dirty, worn, or torn jerseys or those with missing or worn logos/numbers will not be permitted and a new set will need to be purchased. Parents are responsible for black socks, shin pads (both mandatory) and lace up running shoes or outdoor soccer cleats. DSA will purchase good/excellent used condition uniforms (jersey and shorts) for up to \$20.00 per set. In years where DSA or supplier changes the style or colors of jerseys, then all players would have to purchase new jerseys for that one year.

Team Photos

Photos are not being included this year as DSA is uncertain how team photos will work with covid restrictions. If photos go ahead, parents will be responsible for paying an additional charge.

The photo coordinator will distribute photos when they are ready. If you miss the pick-up date, pictures will be available by contacting our administrator. ***At this time, we are not planning on doing photos***

Refund Policy

1. All refunds are subject to \$25.00 administration fee plus any other applicable fees.
2. No refunds will be allowed after April 15th for the outdoor season. See covid exception below.
3. Request for refund must be sent to info@devonsoccer.com stating the reason for refund and is effective once the registrar receives it.
4. Refunds for fees paid by credit or debit card will be refunded to the original card. All other refunds will be issued by cheque in the mail once the cheque is prepared and signed by two executive members at our monthly meeting.
5. Refunds given for lack of registrations in the age group will not be subjected to any fees and will be issued by cheque, once the cheque is prepared and signed by two executive members at our monthly meeting.
6. All refunds are subject to Executive approval.
7. Up to 50% of fees will be refunded, if DSA is shut down for more than 3 weeks due to Covid regulations.



Player Movement Within The DSA

My child would like to play with his friend. Can you accommodate this special request?

Your request is dependent on many things. Are they in the same age category? Are they relatively equal in skill and ability? Did one of them register late? Is there room on the team? Please include your request during the registration process or submit your request to info@devonsoccer.com by the registration deadline. We will evaluate each special request individually but do not guarantee that we will accommodate your request.

My child would like to move down an age category to play with his/her friend. Can he/she do this?

No. Association rules prevent movement down.

My child would like to move up an age category to play with his/her friend. Can he/she do this?

If you wish to move your child to a higher age category, please submit your request in writing to our admin at info@devonsoccer.com by the registration deadline. We will evaluate each special request individually; however, we are reluctant to move any player out of their age category unless the request is necessary and justified. We believe that a player moving up has a definite disadvantage against older, stronger, and faster children and this may negatively influence the child's self-esteem and confidence. We are also concerned about the unfair position it puts the team in, by having an underage player on the team. We would prefer that wherever possible you keep your child in the age group that he/she is supposed to be in.



WHEN AND WHERE WE PLAY

Fields

Devon Soccer has numerous fields in town. Maps are located on our website.

Community Centre North (CCN) & South (CCS)	20 Haven Crescent, Devon
Robina Baker Elementary School (RBES)	1 Jasper Court South, Devon
Riverview Middle School (RMS)	165 Athabasca Avenue, Devon
John Maland High School (JMHS)	105 Athabasca Avenue, Devon

Fields will be finalized once registration is complete as it is based on number of teams in each age categories. You will be notified when schedules are released

Out of Town Fields

Blueberry School	532 Parkland Drive, Parkland County
Duffield School	1 Main Street, Duffield
Graminia School	51101 Range Road 271, Parkland County
Meridian Sports Park (MSP)	53109a Hwy 779, Parkland County

All Devon VS Onoway & Wabamun games will be played at Meridian Sports Park (MSP)

Schedules House League U4-U110

These schedules are made by Devon Soccer Association and are always played in Devon. The times are subject to change depending on fields available.

U4 Tuesday/Thursday 6:30pm – 7:00pm
U6 Monday/Wednesday 6:30pm – 7:15pm
U8 Tuesday/Thursday 6:30pm – 7:30pm
U10 Monday/Wednesday 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Schedules Travel League U12-U15

Parkland makes these schedules after all clubs have submitted their final declarations. You will have a maximum of 9 travel nights for the regular season (most of the time it will be ½ this amount).

U12 Monday/Wednesday 6:30pm – 7:30pm
U15 Tuesday/Thursday 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Pre-season practices will start the 1st week in April

*** A 2nd practice per week is encourage and will be determined by coach as start of season***



Start Date

The approximate start date for all age categories for the outdoor season is the week of April 19th (weather dependent). Schedules will be released through the website and ramp app (instructions will come).

Pre-season Practices

Travel League will have pre-season practices on weekends in April. You will be contacted by your coach once teams have been created. ***Cancelled due to this year's provisions***

Severe Weather Policy

Devon Soccer Association fields will be open in all types of weather (e.g., rain, wind, snow, heat) unless deemed to be unsafe for players, coaches, officials, and spectators, or if it will cause damage to the field. The website will only be updated if the fields are CLOSED. Please follow the practices below:

Lightning and/or Thunder: Immediately leave the field, seeking shelter indoors/inside vehicles with the first flash of lightning or sound of thunder. Wait 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning or sound of thunder before returning to the field.

All other weather: Parents, please use your discretion on whether to have your child play.

Cancellations: If fields are open, you must show up at the field ready to play. If your game has a referee, please remember that they have final say regarding severe weather. Coaches may request a cancellation no sooner than 1.5 hours before the game start time by talking to the other coach AND informing the admin.

Travel teams are obligated to attend games as scheduled. Teams having to cancel league games should be courteous and inform the team contact and DSA administrator in sufficient time to notify their team of the cancellation, remembering the travel time involved.

TOURNAMENTS AND WINDUPS

All tournaments for 2021 are subject to covid guidelines and will only happen, if permitted with enough notice to plan.

Timbits Tournament *Cancelled*

U4 & U6 players are automatically registered in our Tim Horton's yearly sponsored Timbits Jamboree. The tentative date for this event to take place in Devon is on Saturday May 29, 2021. DSA covers the cost of this tournament. Coaches are required to inform DSA admin if their team is not going to attend. There is \$100/team no show/cancellation fee that will be charged back to parents. If your child's team is not entering the tournament, please contact admin to register your child with another team.

This is a fun day with swag bags, Timbits, medals, and other entertainment such as sparkle tattoos, bouncy castles and much more.

Volunteers ages 15 plus will be needed for 1-hour time slots on this day. You will never be scheduled when your children are playing.



Parkland Fun Ball & Soccer Children's Sports Weekend *Cancelled*

All teams U6 + are automatically registered in the Children's Sports Weekend. The tentative date for this event to take place at Meridian Sports Park is on Jun 11,12, & 13, 2021. DSA covers the cost of this tournament. Coaches are required to inform DSA admin if their team is not going to attend. There is \$100/team no show/cancellation fee that will be charged back to parents.

Travel Team Tournaments *Cancelled*

Coaches for travel teams may organize their team attending other tournaments. The coach must collect the registration costs from parents and forward to DSA Admin to complete registration.

VOLUNTEERS

We are requesting that each family choose one hour of volunteering per season. This can be as committed as being on the executive to as simple as a one-hour shift at our tournament. As a volunteer run organization, it takes many hands to keep the workload light. Please do your part to help.

Coach and Assistant Coach

DSA depends on parents/volunteers 18+ to coach our players with assistant coaches being at least 14+. Even those who have never played soccer or have no previous coaching experience can become competent coaches. Coaching clinics are offered in April each year and DSA will pay your fees if attending our Devon clinic or will reimburse your fees in full once you attend a clinic elsewhere. Time commitment is .5 to 1 hr/day 2 times per week during the season, plus tournaments. More time is required of travel team coaches.

All coaches are required to attend a Coaches' Meetings to learn about your position and pick up equipment. Our Administrator will provide you with more information. To ensure that safe and competent coaches are coaching our children every coach is required to provide a new criminal record check every 3 years.

Visit the Coach Area on our website to complete the staff registration.

Team Manager

A team manager is now required for every team in U12 and U15 age categories only. A team manager must be 18+ and is a time commitment of 1-3 hours/week. Team managers are responsible for communication between our administration/age coordinator and the team. This person should be organized and available for last minute fan out of information from time to time.

Visit the Coach Area on our website to complete the staff registration. ***Not needed yet because of this year's provisions***

Referee

Being a referee for DSA is a PAID position. Anyone, male or female ages 13 years and up can apply to be a referee. DSA offers and pays for the required clinics that allow you to be a referee. The time commitment for our club is approximately one hour a day, 2-3 times per week during the soccer season.

Besides being a paid part time job, being a referee gives you physical fitness, life skills, another way to be involved in the game of soccer and the potential to advance as a referee to higher levels.

Visit the Referee Area on our website to apply. ***Not needed yet because of this year's provisions***



Timbit Tournament

DSA needs volunteers ages 15+ to help with setup, take down, BBQ, supervising bouncy houses etc. You will always be able to watch your children play as we do not schedule parents when their children are playing. DSA would love to see some of our older travel team players volunteering. The time commitment is available in 1-hour shifts. ***Not needed because of this year's provisions***

Line Painting

The time commitment is 3-4 times as needed throughout the season for several hours at one time. Work with our Field Coordinator.

Executive Member

A dedicated group of soccer parents make up our executive. Any parent with a child registered in soccer can be nominated for a position at our AGM. Our executive is made up of 7 voting positions including president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and 3 directors. The time commitment is year-round, with a minimum of 6 monthly meetings, task meetings, planning, organizing and being present at most DSA events for the entire duration of the event and being available by phone, text, or email most of the time. Our busiest season is from January to June and slows down for the 2nd half of the year.

To learn more or to join our executive, please attend our AGM or contact our admin at info@devonsoccer.com

Coordinators

Coordinator positions include things like equipment, photos, apparel, referee, field maintenance. The time commitment includes attending 2-3 task meetings, 1-2 events per session plus being able to respond to email requests as need. Our busiest season is from April to June.

To learn more or to become a coordinator, please contact our admin at info@devonsoccer.com.



CODES OF CONDUCT

Parents and Coaches are required to sign a code of conduct when registering for the season. Coaches or team managers will have players sign a team form.

Player's Code of Conduct

1. As a player I will be representing my team and Devon Soccer Association.
2. I will play by the rules and in the spirit of the game and abide by the principles of Fair Play.
3. I will respect my opponents, teammates, coaches, and officials (foul language is included in this).
4. I will do my best to be a true team player and be supportive of all my teammates regardless of skill.
5. I will remember that winning is not everything – that having fun, improving skills, making friends, and doing my best are also important.
6. I will acknowledge all good plays/performances – those of my team and the opponents.
7. I will not coach other players on my team, from the field or bench.
8. I will remember that coaches and officials are here to help me, and I will accept their decisions and show them respect.
9. I will pay attention when coaches are talking, and I will maintain my self-control always.
10. I will try to participate in every game and every practice. If I am going to miss a game or practice, I will notify the coach.
11. I will arrive at the game or practice early enough so that I am ready to participate at the starting time.
12. If I cannot abide by this code of conduct, the coaches have the right to bench me for a reasonable amount of games, or whatever the coach deems a fair and appropriate discipline (laps, burpee's, push-ups etc.)

I understand that if I do not follow this code of conduct, the Coach, the Ref, and the Club has the right to remove me and/or my child from the game, season, or club.

Parent's Code of Conduct

1. I realize that the primary reason that children play soccer is to have fun, not to win.
2. I will demand that my child plays fairly and within the rules.
3. I will help the coach in any positive way possible.
4. I will remember that volunteers run the league.
5. I will not make any negative comments to any child, especially my own.
6. I will praise the efforts of every player.
7. I will applaud good plays by our team AND by members of the opposing team.
8. I will accept the results of each game and encourage my child to: Be gracious in victory and turn defeat to victory by working towards improvement.
9. I will accept the referee calls.
10. I will be a parent that leads by example.

I understand that if I do not follow this code of conduct, the Coach, the Ref, and the Club has the right to remove me and/or my child from the game, season, or club.



Coaches' Code of Conduct

1. As a coach, I need to be a positive role model.
2. I will need to display and instill in my players the principals of good sportsmanship and team play.
3. Be reasonable in my demands on my player's time, energy, enthusiasm, and their performance on the soccer field.
4. Be a good example. Children need a coach they can respect.
5. Be generous with my praise when it is deserved. Find something positive to say about each player. Players should never be ridiculed for making mistakes or losing a game.
6. Develop team respect for the ability of opponents and for the judgment of referees and opposing coaches.
7. Keep informed about sound principles of coaching, growth and development principles relating to children.
8. Impress on my players the need to abide by the rules of the game always.
9. I will respect the officials of the game and abide by their decisions.
10. Check equipment and facilities that we use. They should meet safety standards and be appropriate for the age and ability of my players.
11. I will comply with the decisions of league officials and observe all rules, policy and procedures as established or endorsed by Devon Soccer Association.

I understand that if I do not follow this code of conduct, the Ref and the Club have the right to remove me from the game, season, or club.

OTHER RULES AND INFORMATION

Disputes or other Incidents

If disputes occur between you and your child's coach or other team officials, handle it with dignity. Treat the coach and/or team official with respect, he/she is sincere in his/her intent to be hard working on behalf of every member of the team. Remember that your actions have the biggest impact on how your child will react to similar situations. If all attempts to rectify the situation directly with the coach or team official fails, please wait 24 hours (cool down period) to fill out the complaint form via our website within 48 hours. DSA and/or Parkland will address complaints as quick as possible.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited at DSA events, including but not limited to practices, games, tournaments, and windups.

Pets

Pets are strictly prohibited at DSA events, including but not limited to practices, games, tournaments, and windups. There will be a \$25.00 fine for anyone having a pet at a DSA or Parkland Soccer event.

Who can be on the field?

The only people allowed on the field are coaches, managers, and players that our registered with DSA. No siblings, parents or friends are allowed on the field when the team is on the field expect when invited by the Coach/Referee.



Where do the players/parents sit during practices/games?

U4/U6 – players may sit on same side as parents but should sit together in a row with their teammates and coaches.

U8 and up – parents will sit on one side of the field and the players on the other side of the field. This makes it easier for the coaches to know where their players are for line changes.

Snacks/Water

Players should eat before coming to practices/games or when they are finished. There is no snack break. Every player must have a full water bottle at every practice/game. Please label their bottles to avoid mix-ups.

Trash

If you bring it with you, take it with you. Respect our fields and environment.

Sunscreen/Bug Spray

Parents, please bring sunscreen and bug spray.

Clothing for rain/cold weather

Parents may want to wear rain gear as there is no shelter. Bring blankets for yourself and for your player to use on the sideline when it is cold. Players may use layers under their uniforms, including long sleeve shirts, however, nothing with a hood is permitted.

Hats and Jewelry

Hats with brims are not allowed on the field. No jewelry is allowed, including but not limited to earrings, nose rings, necklaces, rings. This is for all age categories.

Referees

For our leagues that do have a referee, DSA expects coaches, parents, and players to treat the referees with respect. Our U8 teams will have kids that are 13-14 years old referring their games and it is unacceptable for anyone to berate, belittle or yell at these refs. DSA has the right to remove anyone they see displaying bad behaviour towards the refs.



Development for each age category

Age Category

Focus

U4	Development of physical literacy, running hopping, skipping, balancing etc. So, there will be mistakes and players falling and tripping as they ‘find their feet’.
U6	Ball mastery, bringing physical literacy to support the development of mastering the ball, this is only possible with positive physical literacy. So, within this stage the player’s focus is often upon the player and the ball. Expect frustration and a very limited desire to share. Encourage this and allow the players to experiment with new moves and tricks.
U8/U10	This is the stage where the game concept really takes hold. The player has mastered the individual techniques and is ready to put them into play, in a game. So now is the time for the focus to move towards team play and tactics. Again, there will be mistakes and miss-placed passes. The focus should therefore be on exploring options of play and not whether a play was the right or wrong one.
U12-U15	This is the final stage of development; some players may be returning to soccer or entering it for the first time. However, the emphasis is upon participation and fun. So regardless of age, ability, or level of competition there is always a game to be played.

For more details or to discuss our programming please contact our administrator at info@devonsoccer.com.



RULES

Local Modifications to the Laws of the Game:

The normal rules and laws of the game of soccer will apply for all age groups subject to the following modifications where applicable. When referred to, micro-field includes U4 and U6, mini-field includes U8 and U10, and full-field refers to U12 and above. The FIFA laws of the game can be downloaded from our website, and it is strongly recommended that all officials, coaches, referees, and assistant referees (linesmen) do so.

1. The game shall be divided into two halves with a 5-minute break at half time (u4 exception). The restart of play for the second half shall be by the team that did not kick off the first half.
 - a. U4 – one 15-minute half
 - b. U6 – two 15-minute halves
 - c. U8/U10 - two 25-minute halves
 - d. U12/U15 – two 30-minute halves

The referee may make an allowance of a few minutes added time at the end of either half to compensate for any excessive time lost during play. (See guidelines to help explain the rules #13).

2. Field size
 - a. U4 – 60 x 90 feet
 - b. U6 – 90 x 120 feet
 - c. U8 and U10 – 120 x 180 feet
 - d. U12 and U15 – Regulation full size field. See FIFA laws.

3. Goal posts & ball sizes shall be:
 - a. U4 – pug net, size 3 ball
 - b. U6 – pug net, size 3 ball
 - c. U8 – 5 x 8 feet, size 3 ball
 - d. U10 – 5 x 8 feet, size 3 ball
 - e. U12– Regulation full size net. See FIFA laws, size 4 ball.
 - f. U15 – Regulation full size net. See FIFA laws, size 5 ball.

4. Format:
 - a. U4 – 3 vs 3 no goalkeeper
 - b. U6 – 5 vs 5
 - c. U8/U10 – 7 vs 7
 - d. U12/U15 – 11 vs 11

5. Unlimited substitution is allowed, but only when the ball is out of play (see guidelines to help explain the laws #2), and upon the approval of the referee.

Modifications for Micro Field (U4 and U6) only:

6. The toss of a coin will be used to determine who kicks off and starts the game.
7. After a goal, the game will restart from center.
8. Praise should be given regardless of which team scores.



9. Goalkeeper
 - a. U4 no goalkeeper to encourage as many goals as possible.
 - b. U6 goalkeeper can use their hands to stop the ball. They can either kick or throw ball back into play.
10. When the ball goes out of play (out the side or ends), coach should blow the whistle to stop players movement.
 - a. U4 a coach or spectator should throw the ball back into play.
 - b. U6 a player should do a throw in. Feet planted on the ground, hold ball with two hands straight over head, throw forward, without moving feet.
11. No referees, one coach from each team should work together to run the game.
12. Players are encouraged to play in all positions, as set positions are fostered in U12 and up.
13. No limit on substitutions, allowed anytime during game.
14. Rotate players approximately every 3 minutes, only players sitting near the team bench(blanket) will be rotated into play.

Modifications for Mini Field (U8 and U10) only:

15. The normal throw-in rule is to apply with one re-throw allowed for mini field only.
16. No offside rule shall apply.
17. The goalkeeper cannot deliberately touch the ball with his/her hands or arms outside the 6-yard goal area.
18. The goalkeeper only, is to restart play within the 6-yard goal area.
19. No goal can be scored from within the opposing team's 6-yard goal area. The last touch by the attacking player must occur outside the goal area for a goal to be allowed. If, however, the ball is subsequently touched by a defending player inside his or her own goal area before the ball enters the goal, then the goal will stand. All players can be within and play the ball within the goal area. Should the ball be put into the goal from within the goal area by an attacking player, then play should restart with a goal kick. (See Guideline #4 below).
20. Only one coach or team official from each team can be on the field of play during the game, and only the referee may carry a whistle. The coach or team official on the field of play may not stand or be within the 6-yard goal area during play and cannot be behind the goal line.
21. Reckless, dangerous, or careless tackles or challenges will not be tolerated and may result in a yellow card or ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee.

Modifications for Full Field (U12 and U15) only:

22. All full field teams must have jerseys with visible numbers on them.
23. A team captain must be designated by each team for each game and the league strongly encourages changing the captain for each game.



24. The coach may not approach the referee during the game. The team captain is the only person allowed to address the referee, and in an appropriate manner. The coach must go through the team captain to ask the referee any question; however, the referee may approach the coach.
25. Should circumstances at game time be such that one team has insufficient players to play with 11 a side, the respective team coaches can decide to play with 9 or 10 players per team, at their discretion and mutual agreement. As we are a fun ball community it is suggested to share players to even out the numbers on each team, if coaches agree.
26. Reckless, dangerous, or careless tackles or challenges will not be tolerated & may result in a yellow card or ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee.
27. Coaches and players must not go more than 20 feet away from the halfway line and are not allowed to cross the halfway line. Opposing coaches and players should be on the same side of the field.

Guidelines to Help Explain the Laws of the Game

The following guidelines may help to clarify some of the FIFA laws of the game as they currently stand.

1. The toss of the coin will be used to determine who kicks off and starts the game. The team that wins the coin toss decides which end to attack in the first half. The team that loses the coin toss kicks off the game.
2. The ball is in play once the kickoff has been taken at the start of the game and does not cease to be in play until either a) it wholly crosses either touch line or either goal line, or b) when the referee blows his / her whistle to stop play for an infraction of the rules. In either case, the ball is in play again once the game has restarted in the appropriate manner.
3. When the ball is in play, it is in play for all players, including the goalkeeper, within his or her penalty area and/or goal area even when the goalkeeper has the ball in control with his/her hands or has the ball Covered with anything but his/her feet. However, when the goalkeeper has the ball under control or covered, players must not prevent him/her from releasing the ball. Outside of the penalty area in full field or goal area in mini field the goalkeeper cannot deliberately touch the ball with his/her hands or arms, the same as every other player. Should the goalkeeper do this, then it is a handball offence (see Guideline # 8 below).
4. A goal kick is called when a player touches the ball either deliberately or accidentally and it goes out of play, either on the ground or in the air, over his/her **OPPOSING TEAM'S** goal line but not into the goal. The game then restarts by a player of the team defending that end of the field kicking the ball from off the ground from any point within the goal area at that end. At the time that the kick is taken, no players other than the goalkeeper and/or the player taking the kick may be inside the penalty area in full field, or the goal area in mini field. Once the goal kick is taken, the kicker may NOT touch the ball again until it has touched another player on either team, and no other player may touch the ball until it has passed outside of the penalty area in full field or the goal area in mini field. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick without the ball being touched by another player before it enters the goal, however, should a player take a goal kick and the ball then somehow travel back into his/her own goal without being Touched by another player then a goal is NOT awarded.



5. A penalty kick is awarded when a player is guilty of committing any of the **DIRECT** free kick offences (see FIFA laws of the game, law 12) inside his/her **OWN** team's penalty area in full field or goal area in mini field, when the ball is in play and irrespective of where the ball is at the time. Penalty kicks to be taken from the marked spot 12 yards directly in front of the midpoint of the goal in full field, or from a point 6 yards directly in front of the mid-point of the goal in mini field. A penalty kick should be direct on goal. All players except the defending goalkeeper are to remain behind the penalty kicker, outside of the penalty area in full field or goal area in mini field and at least ten yards away from the ball until the ball has been kicked. The penalty kick may be taken by any player on the team to whom the penalty kick has been awarded. Once the penalty kick is taken, the kicker may **NOT** touch the ball again until it has touched another player on either team. Before the kick is taken, the defending goalkeeper must be positioned on his/her goal line and must not move forward off the goal line until the ball has been kicked. Once the ball is kicked, it is in play.
6. A corner kick is to be called when a player (including a goalkeeper) touches the ball either deliberately or accidentally and it goes out of play, either on the ground or in the air, over his/her **OWN TEAM'S** goal line but not into the goal. The game then re-starts with the corner kick being taken from off the ground at the corner nearest to the point at which the ball crossed the line, by a player of the team that is attacking that end of the field. At the time that the kick is taken, no player on the team defending the corner kick may be within 10 yards of the ball. Once the corner kick is taken, the kicker may **NOT** touch the ball again until it has touched another player on either team. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick without the ball being touched by another player before it enters the goal.
7. Reckless, dangerous, or careless tackles or challenges will not be tolerated and may result in a yellow card or ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee. A referee may consider a challenge or tackle to fall under this description if, for instance, a player is overly forceful or is not in control of his / her own body or is acting in a way that has potential to cause injury – either to themselves or another player - as they make a tackle or challenge.
8. Handball is called when a player (other than a goalkeeper **WITHIN** his/her **OWN** penalty area or goal area) **DELIBERATELY** uses his/her hand **OR ARM** to control or propel the ball in some way. Handball should **NOT** be called when the ball strikes the hand or arm of a player in such a way that is unintentional, for example if the ball takes a deflection and flies up quickly hitting a player's hand giving him/her no chance to react. Should a player use his/her hand or arm in a way that is to defend his/her body (for example to stop the ball from hitting him/her hard in the face) then the handball call should be at the discretion of the referee. Factors that the referee should consider in this kind of circumstance are the time that the player had to react before deflecting the ball with his/her hand (i.e., whether the act was deliberate or just instinctive) and the age group of the players (more leniency in this circumstance should be shown to the younger age groups.) Should the referee call a handball offence then play restarts with a **DIRECT** free kick awarded to the opposing team of the player who committed the handball offence.
9. Two yellow cards in the same game are the equivalent of one red card and will result in a sending off (ejection). As per League Regulation #21 a red card ejection for a player is not only for the existing game but will result in a suspension for the following game as well.



10. A throw in is called when the ball goes out of play, either on the ground or in the air, by crossing over either of the touch lines. The throw in is awarded to the opposing team of the player who last touched the ball, either deliberately or accidentally, before it went out of play. The correct procedure for taking a throw in is as follows:

- The throw in must be taken from the point on the touch line at which the ball went out of play.
- The player taking the throw in must be standing with some part of **BOTH** of his / her feet touching the ground either behind or on the touch line as he/she throws the ball.
- The player taking the throw in must be facing the field of play when throwing in the ball.
- The ball must be held with both hands when thrown in.
- The ball must be thrown from behind and over the head.
- The ball must be cleanly thrown, and not dropped or pushed down onto the ground.
- Once a throw in is taken, the thrower may NOT touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

A goal may **NOT** be scored against either team directly from a throw in. After it is thrown in, the ball must touch another player before it enters the goal for a goal to stand. If the ball is thrown directly into the goal, then play restarts with either a goal kick, or corner kick depending on which end of the field that this occurred. For example, if a player throws the ball directly into his/her opponent's goal then play restarts with a goal kick. If he/she throws it directly into his / her own goal then play restarts with a corner kick, in accordance with points 4 and 6 above.

11. In full field a goal may be scored from **ANYWHERE** on the field, including within the penalty area or goal area, provided that no infraction of the laws has occurred while scoring the goal.

12. A goalkeeper may **NOT** handle the ball (except to make a save to prevent a goal) if the last touch to him/her was an **INTENTIONAL kick** of the ball by a member of his/her **OWN** team. A player may however play the ball to his/her goalkeeper by means of heading the ball, kneeing the ball or chesting the ball and the goalkeeper may handle the ball in this circumstance. The goalkeeper may also handle the ball if the last touch was via an unintentional deflection off the foot off one of his / her own players, or after any touch from an opposing player. Should an infraction occur under this rule then play is restarted with an **INDIRECT** free kick awarded to the opposing team to that of the goalkeeper who handled the ball.

13. The referee may make an allowance of a few minutes added time at the end of either half to compensate for time lost during play. However, certain stoppages in play, such as the ball going out of play, are part of the game and time should not be added to allow for this unless there has been an excessive stoppage (e.g., ball being kicked out over a fence or into trees and having to be found and recovered or replaced.) Time taken over substitutions is also considered to be part of the game and should not be included in time to be added on. Examples of where a referee should allow extra stoppage time, include but are not limited to; time lost due to an injured player receiving attention; time lost to a stoppage in the game due to an outside interference; and time lost due to a player deliberately wasting time by not restarting the game promptly after the ball has gone out of play.



Appendix to the Manual: The Offside Rule Explained

Before reading this appendix, please take the time to download the pdf document of the laws of the game from our website:

FIFA law #11 (offside) states that:

A player **is in an offside position** if:

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

A player **is not in an offside position** if:

- He is in his own half of the field of play or
- He is level with the second-last opponent or
- He is level with the last two opponents

Put simply, if a player is in a position that is in his / her opponent's half of the field, **AND** ahead of the second-last defender on the opposing team, **AND** ahead of the ball then he / she is in an offside position. Considering that the last defender back on a team is usually the goalkeeper, the second-last defender as referred to here will usually refer to the last outfield player back on the defending team. During the game, the assistant referees (linesmen) will usually take up a position on the touch line that keeps them level with this furthest back outfield defender in the half in which they are officiating, in order that they can accurately see which (if any) attacking players are in offside positions.

However – and this is the important part – **it is not an offence for a player merely to be in an offside position.**

For an offside offence to occur and a team be penalized for having a player who is judged to be offside, the following conditions must be met:

At the time that another player on the SAME team plays the ball, the player in the offside position must be interfering with active play in some way. For example, by playing or attempting to play the ball, by interfering with or having an influence on the actions of an opposing player, or by gaining a clear advantage from being in the offside position.

Pages 104 to 110 of the FIFA laws of the game document show thirteen different diagrams displaying different examples of how this law should be applied and put into practice in accordance with those conditions as outlined above. Here are some important points to remember when looking at this.

1. **A player does NOT have to touch the ball to be called offside.** Examples 4, 6 and 9 in the FIFA document demonstrate how this is so. In example 4, player A is gaining an advantage from being in the offside position because he has a “head start” on the defenders and has a clear and unchallenged run at the ball. In example 6, player A has interfered with an opposing player by blocking the goalkeeper's line of vision, rendering the goalkeeper less able to deal with the shot at his goal. In example 9, player A has had an influence on the actions of opposing player B by running at him and putting him under pressure to play the ball more quickly.



2. **Remember, an offside offence is judged according to the relative positions of players and the ball AT THE TIME THAT THE BALL IS PLAYED.** Example 13 in the FIFA document demonstrates this. Player B is not offside, because at the time that the ball was played by player A, he was at point B1, which is not in an offside position. Because of this, it does not matter that he subsequently runs on and touches the ball at point B2, which is in a position in advance of the second-last defender (or last outfield defender as discussed above). Player C is also not offside. At the time that the ball is played by player A, he is in an offside position, but at that time he is not interfering with active play because he is neither playing or attempting to play the ball, nor interfering with or influencing an opponent, not gaining any advantage from being in that position. By the time the ball is played for a second time, this time by player B at point B2, player C is still not offside because he is now behind the ball, and therefore NOT in an offside position.
3. **The ball is considered to have been played when a player kicks, heads or otherwise legally propels the ball in such a manner that it is released from his / her control,** for example when attempting to pass the ball to another player, taking a shot at goal, or just kicking the ball to another part of the field or out of play. The ball being dribbled (kept at close control whilst running or walking) by a player does NOT constitute the ball being played. Therefore, a team may have one or more players in offside positions while another player is dribbling the ball, and none of these players may be called offside until such time as the player dribbling the ball plays the ball in the manner outlined in this point – if they are still in offside positions at that time.
4. **An offside player may not “tag up” in hockey style to avoid being offside.** Take example 4 in the FIFA document. At the time that the ball is played in that example, player A is offside, as discussed in point 1. After the ball has been played, player A may NOT step back to be level with the last outfield defender and then set off in pursuit of the ball again in the manner of a hockey forward skating back to touch the blue line before going after the puck. The offside offence has already occurred in this example and cannot be overturned.



COVID PROTOCOLS *ADDED APRIL 15, 2021*****

1. If your child or anyone in your home is sick or has been a direct contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID – please stay home.
2. Please limit spectators on the side of the field to one per child (parents who are coaches do not count in this ratio). Spectators should be 3 meters back from the field, opposite side of players for U8 and up. Please use appropriate outdoor social distancing measures.
3. Each group will have a max of 10 participants, including players and coaches. The U4 & U6 practice teams will remain the same if games open. The U8 and up, have an A & B practice team, should games open, each set of A & B will join to make a team.
4. Contact tracing will be necessary should a case happen. We will utilize the RAMP app to record attendance. Further instructions on the RAMP app will be sent closer to start date.
5. We ask that coaches, players, and spectators use hand sanitizer before and after each session. There will be hand sanitizer available to each group of Devon fields, in case you forget yours.
6. Coaches will be required to wear a mask during sessions. Players will not be required to wear masks on the field. We ask that coaches, players, and spectators wear a mask getting to and from the fields, if social distancing is not feasible.
7. No games will be played at this time, only lessons and physically conditioning while social distancing. Coaches may get closer to assist players for short amounts of time.
8. Coaches will be responsible to cleaning all balls each session. Details and supplies will be issued at coaches meeting.
9. Players need to have a clearly labeled water bottle at the side of field.
10. This list is subject to change as public health restrictions change.