



Important Rules Indoor Soccer

2025-2026

U12 – U18 Divisions

1. Number of Players and Equipment

- The game shall be played with:
- **U12 - 6 a side** – 1 goalkeeper and 5 outfield players. Modified field size
- Beginner introduction to formations, game rules and tactical side of soccer;
- **U12 Retreat Line (1/2 way line of the field)**
- Players will play a multitude of positions and with equal playing time for all.
- **U14 to U18 – 6 a side** -1 goalkeeper and 5 outfield players
- A minimum of 4 players is required to start play (3 plus a goalkeeper)
- Players are to wear socks over their Shinguards, Cleats or Indoor shoes and New equipment provided
- Players are not allowed to wear kneepads or sweatpants. The only exception is the goalkeeper.
- **JEWELRY - No Player will be permitted to play with jewelry.** (earrings, rings, necklaces, watches)
- **SHINGUARDS ARE MANDATORY!!** To be worn under socks.
- Players can be "traded" to the other team to ensure numbers are equal, ensure more competitive and enjoyable experience. This can happen at the start and during the game
- **2 girls or more present for both teams = 1 Girl on pitch at all times. 1 or fewer girls present for either team = Regular game.**

2. Duration of Play

- **All players MUST play equal time.**
- Please remember all leagues are Co-Ed and recreational. Equal time for every player is expected!!
- Games are 2 x 25 minute halves. Halftime must be no longer than 3 minutes in length. Halftime should be used to keep the start times of all games on time. All sessions are slotted for 27 or 43 minutes. Games must start at your schedule time then finish with 5 minutes left to allow yourselves to leave and new teams time to get ready.
- The clock will be stopped at all stoppages of play in the last minute of the first half no matter the score
- *If score is 2 goals or less starting with one minute remaining in the second half, the clock will be stopped at all stoppages of play. If the score is 3 goals or more at the 1 minute mark, the clock will remain running for the last minute of the match. If the score becomes a 2 goal difference during the final minute, the clock still remains running.

3. Substitutions

- All substitutions except the goalie can be made on the fly.

4. Three Goal Limit

- Individual players are limited to 4 goals per game, any goals beyond what this individual scores, will not count and play be re-started with a goal kick.

5. Free Kicks

- All free-kicks are **INDIRECT** (except for penalty kicks). There will also be a 2 step back maximum rule as a run up.
- The wall is now only required to be 2 yards away rather than 5 yards. This is to improve the standard of play & safety.

6. Goalkeeper Rules

- The penalty area (larger goal crease) is the only area the goalkeeper can handle the ball.
- If the goalkeeper is to handle the ball at a time when not permitted, the ball shall be placed on the top arc.
- The goalkeeper has 5 seconds to release the ball. He/She may take as many steps as they wish inside the penalty area.
- **** Many Goalkeepers at U 12 are new to the role and there needs to be patience with this rule. Please talk to the goalkeepers after they make this mistake and allow them to re-do**
- The goalkeeper can only be substituted on an injury, after a goal has been scored or a time penalty has been assessed
- The goalkeeper cannot throw/kick the ball directly over three lines.

7. Pass Back Rule

- The goalkeeper can pick up the ball:
 - When it has not been kicked to him/her by a teammate
 - When the attacking team has last touched the ball
- The goalkeeper cannot pick up the ball when:
 - Passed back to him/her after being kicked by a teammate
- **** Many Goalkeepers at U 12 are new to the role and there needs to be patience with this rule. Please talk to the goalie after they make this mistake and allow them to re-do**

8. Ball placement for the following:

- When the ball goes over the sideboard and hits the netting, the kick in will be at the point where the ball crossed the perimeter wall.
- When the ball hits the ceiling netting, the ball is placed in the center of the nearest defensive line from where it was last touched.
- Dribble ins for U12 division only.

9. Goal Crease ball placement

- If the attacking team commits a foul inside its opponent's penalty area, the ball can be placed anywhere within the penalty area.
- If the defending team commits a technical offense inside the penalty area, the ball shall be placed on the top of the penalty arc (yellow dotted line) and a direct free kick awarded.
- The penalty kick rule is always in effect for penal offences committed by the defending team within its own penalty area.

10. Three Line Rule

- When the ball travels in the air directly from one defensive third line over the other defensive third line and the ball has not touched any players, the boards or ground, **the ball is to be placed at the mark in the middle of the first defensive zone line the ball crossed**. Possession goes to the other team and it is a **INDIRECT** free kick.
- A team that has been numerically disadvantaged by two (2) players may send the ball directly over three lines with no violation of the rule.
- This does not include minor time penalties issued to both teams at different times (4vs3) where one team has 4 players on the floor and the other team has 3 players on the floor.

11. Cards

- A referee shall give for any minor or major infractions yellow or red card.
- When a yellow card is issued to a player, that player must serve the minor time penalty (with relief). When a card is issued to the team or goalkeeper, any player may serve the minor time penalty (with relief). A team cannot play with less than 3 players and a goalie at any time. (when 2 players short, there is no three line rule in effect)
- **All time penalties are independent of the game clock (stopped time by separate watch)**

12. Retreat Line (U12 Only)

Retreat Line - The Retreat Line will come into effect in three situations during the game:

- A Goal Kick
- Goalkeeper in possession of the ball, after a save for example.
- A Free Kick to the defending team within its own third.

At these three situations, the opposing team is required to move beyond the Retreat Line.

The player that has the ball should then pass the ball to one of his team-mates without the pressure of an opposing player nearby.

Once a defender has touched the ball, or if the goalkeeper takes a touch after dropping the ball, the play will resume as normal and the "opposing" team can move inside the Retreat Line.

****The Retreat Line rule is a common practice throughout the world and aimed at improving the standard of overall play when it comes to building through zones and reducing 'punts' down field by the goalkeepers.**