



Outdoor Rules of Play -- Under 5

SYSI rules are adapted from FIFA rules of the game based on the specifics of this age group as well as the conditions offered in the venues available. Please see the comments section for detailed tips on each law.

LAW # 1 – OUTDOOR FIELD OF PLAY

- **Outdoor facilities and surface:** Lined Green Spaces; City Parks - Grass
- **Field size:** Recommended Size – ~ 59 feet (18 m) wide x 88 feet (27 m) long
- **Field markings:**
 - o Existing lines on the field and additional cones if desired.
 - o The center divides the field of play into two halves with the center point (kick off) at the middle of the center (halfway) line.
 - o No penalty area in U5 outdoor.
- **The goals:**
 - o Must be placed on the center of each goal line – 3 ft (width) x 5 ft (height)
 - o Ideal goals to be used are pop up goals
 - o We want to offer the kids the experience of scoring the goal which is one of the most rewarding experiences in soccer. The more goals the better!
 - o Goals can be scored from anywhere on the field but must pass under the height of the crossbar or flag and between the posts or flags/cones.
 - o Safety First: No cross bars with ropes etc.
 - o If goals are not available, an alternative solution could be to make the entire goal line count, and the ball must pass entirely over the line.
 - o Where only cones are available, judgment is best! Remember this is not meant to look like adults playing.

LAW # 2 – THE BALL

U5 = Size 3

- The ball must be appropriate for the age of the player.
- Size 3 ball is smaller and lighter allowing an easier kick, dribble, or pass.
- Please ensure that the ball is pumped up, but with a small amount of “give” to assist players with ball control. Remember safety first.
- The home team will supply the game ball unless the visiting team has a more satisfactory ball. This shall be agreed upon by coaches from each team.

LAW # 3 – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- **Format of play is 3 vs 3** on the field at any given time with a recommended roster number of 5 - 8 players for each team.
- Mini soccer coaches should advise the SYSI office if the opposing team fails to appear for a game.
- Mini teams may use the services of a permit player registered with another mini team in a younger age group provided that the permission of the legal guardian and coach of the permit player is obtained.
- **Player Position:** Mini soccer is a developmental program that focuses on fun and broad player development rather than strict positional roles. Instead, SYSI mandates that all players rotate through all positions at this age level, (no goalkeepers), to ensure equal playing time, familiarity, and experience.
- **No Goalkeepers at Under-5.**
 - o Rationale: There are no goalkeepers at U5, and this allows all the kids to chase the ball down the field. The action is where the fun is, and the fun is where the ball is. This will allow the kids to further develop basic motor skills (running, jumping) as well as soccer specific skills (kicking the ball, dribbling,

passing). The players will be in contact with the ball more and this will allow them to experience “the decision-making process” more, often enhancing their early knowledge and allowing for the reflexes (connections brain-muscles) to be formed. Playing on both offense and defense will allow the players to SLOWLY begin to understand the role of teammates.

- **Intermissions** are called roughly every 5-8 minutes, which allows for substitutions of all players on the field.
 - o Rationale: players that are changed every 2 – 3 minutes very seldom touch the ball during that time (sometimes never touching the ball). With longer and consistent playing time on the field the players will have more of an opportunity to touch the ball and learn to play the game, and ultimately enjoy their soccer experience.
- **Substitutions** Unlimited; Can be at a stoppage or on the fly!

LAW # 4 – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

- An official “soccer kit” includes a jersey, shorts, socks and shin-guards.
- Equipment should be safe for all players, and distinctive between the two teams. Where the colors of competing teams are similar, the home team will change uniforms. Where alternative uniforms are used, the uniforms need not be numbered. In the absence of uniforms, pinnies may be used instead.
- Shirts should be tucked in, and socks should be pulled up over the shin-guards. This is done in case the shin-guards have edges to them that may hurt their fellow players.
- Remember safety first!

LAW # 5 – THE REFEREES

- No Referees.
- Coaches are considered game leaders and are encouraged before each game to talk with their counterparts concerning the rules of play.
- Make sure that the rules are followed and that the Fair Play nature of the game is followed. Remember kids emulate adults all the time.
- Each coach should stand outside the field of play in his or her own half of the field.
- **We are here to make the game enjoyable for the children, parents, and fans! Watching the game comes second!**

LAW # 6 – DURATION OF THE MATCH

- Coaches are encouraged to discuss length of game time at the start of their scheduled hour.
- Teams are recommended to play fun drills, games or warm up activities for the first 30 minutes. Ensure that every child has a ball so they can get high contact time and lots of touches on the ball. The overall recommended duration of the game is a total of 30 minutes with 2 x 15 min halves, with timeouts every 7 minutes.
- Estimated 4 x 7-minute substitution changes or as frequently as needed
 - o Due to the busy schedule please try to be on time and have respect for others’ time on the floor. Use common sense and be considerate with problems that arise. Work them out and be a good example for the kids!!
- Please note, in extreme weather conditions please remember that the safety and well-being of the players is the most important thing. In extreme heat, offer lots of water, allow head wear, find shade, and make sure to communicate with your fellow coaches on the other team if you feel that conditions are too bad to continue. Remember, there must be a balance between wanting to play and being safe. If there is lightning spotted or thunder heard, immediately discontinue playing and seek shelter immediately. For more information about inclement weather procedures please visit:

https://cloud.rampinteractive.com/saskatoonyouthsoccer/files/Rules/lightning_policy_e4.pdf

LAW # 7 – KICK-OFF AND RESTART OF THE GAME

- Always takes place from the center point (visible or imaginary) of the halfway line of the playing area.
- At the kick-off to start the game or after a goal is scored the opposing team will retreat to their half of the field and cannot move forward until the kick has been taken.
- Opposing players must be at least 3 meters (4 yards) away from the ball at the kick-off after a goal and/or the start of the game and/or half time.
- The defending team must retreat to the half-way line only on goal kicks. The team may re-enter the opponent’s half once the ball has left the penalty area of the defending team.
- The ball can move in any direction to begin play.

LAW # 8 – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- The ball is considered out of play if:
 - o If the ball goes over the sideline (touch line), or if it hits the bleachers, goes into stands (stages), into player's benches, off a parent, or off the ceiling, or any other amenity considered by both coaches to be "Out-of-Play" the game is restarted by:
 - o A Kick-In or Dribble-In (considered an INDIRECT - Free Kick ~ means that the ball must be passed before scoring a goal) taken from the point where the ball went out of play over the touch line (visible or imaginary) by the team that did not touch the ball last. The player can also choose to Dribble-In (see Law 9) the ball from the point where the ball went out of play over the touch line. The ball is in play as soon as it passes the touch line.
- It is recommended that whenever possible, spectators are not to interfere at all with the game and watch from the stands. If there are no stands to watch the game from, spectators are to move out of the way of the ball. Spectators are not to allow the ball to bounce off them or to kick it back into play.
- The Kick-in or Dribble-in shall be taken by the team that did not TOUCH the ball last. Opponents must be at least 3 meters (4 yards) away from the ball on all the above.

LAW # 9 – SCORING AND OFFSIDE

- There is no offside in mini soccer. Goals can be scored from anywhere on the field, but cannot be scored directly from a kick-off, Kick-in, Dribble-in or an indirect free kick.
- No scores are recorded or kept at the age group.

LAW # 10 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- Even though fouls in the game occur, they are almost always unintentional. Remember the age of the children in front of you. When fouls occur (such as tripping, kicking, pushing, handling the ball intentionally, etc.) the opposing team is awarded an **INDIRECT FREE KICK**. This means that the ball must first be passed to another player before a goal can be scored.
- The coach/parent should explain all infringements to **EVERYONE** including the player who committed the foul. This will assist in not alienating the player and gives everyone an explanation of what is not correct behavior on the soccer field.
- No caution (yellow card) or send-off (red card) should be issued to the players.
- **SLIDE TACKLES ARE NOT ALLOWED** in outdoor soccer. Players are not allowed to leave their feet or "go to ground" to win the ball from the opponent. If any coach is found to be allowing this from their players, disciplinary action will be taken.

LAW # 11 – KICK-IN, AND DRIBBLE-IN

- THE KICK IN – considered INDIRECT free kick. The ball must be passed before a goal is scored. The kick-in will be taken from the place the ball went out of play with the opponents at least 4 yards away until the ball is in play.
- THE DRIBBLE-IN – considered INDIRECT, the ball must be passed before a goal is scored. The player can dribble the ball into play from the place the ball went out of play with the opponent at least 4 yards away until the ball has been touched by the player.
 - o Rational: This is for players who are unable to kick it far enough, instead of the game being stopped because the player touches the ball again. Only use this restart if necessary.
- The kick-in will be taken from the place where the ball went out of play with the opponents at least 3 meters (4 yards) away until the ball is in play.

Team Practices & Player Equipment/Jerseys

- Saskatoon Youth Soccer is not responsible for providing team equipment or jerseys for the teams as well as booking practice times.
- Practices are scheduled and determined between the team coaches and the Community Soccer Coordinator. Player equipment will be picked up by the coach from your Community Soccer Coordinator.