



Outdoor Rules of Play -- Under 9

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 – ~82 feet (25 m) wide x 118 feet (36 m) long
- **Field markings:**
 - o Existing lines on the field and additional cones if desired.
 - o The center divides the field of play into 2 halves with the center point (kick-off) at the middle of the center (halfway) line (cones are used if needed).
 - o No Penalty Area in U9 outdoor.
 - o The goal crease which is the equivalent of a mini-goal area is introduced to indicate the goal area the goalkeeper can handle the ball with their hands.
- **The goals:**
 - o Must be placed on the center of each goal line - 5 ft wide x 8 ft high (or as high as the flags)
 - 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 of the entire goal line can be considered a goal if the ball passes 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

- **U9 = Size 3 or 4 (super light)**
- The ball must be appropriate for the age of the player. Size 3 or 4 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 for U9 is 5 vs 5** on the field at any given time with a recommended roster size of 7-10 players for each team.
- There is no minimum number of players required for mini games and teams can exchange players to ensure that each has sufficient players.
- 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:** Under-9 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, including goalkeeper, to ensure equal playing time, familiarity, and experience.
- **Goalkeepers** are allowed at U9:
 - o The goalkeeper position is not to be assigned to one or two players ~ this position should rotate amongst all players on the team.

- Also offer the opportunity to be a goalkeeper to all the kids interested, but make sure they do have sufficient time to run around as well.
- **Intermissions** are called roughly every 5-10 minutes, which allows for substitutions of all players on the field.
 - **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; any 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 the players and distinctive between the 2 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.
- The goalkeepers should have a different bib or jersey that can identify them as the only players that can handle the ball in the goal crease.
- 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.

LAW # 5 – THE REFEREES

- There are no referees.
- Coaches only facilitate the game and are considered the game leaders.
- Coaches should stand outside the field of play in their own half of the field.
- Coaches are encouraged before each game to talk with their counterparts concerning rules of play. Let the players move the ball to the right spot for kick-offs, kick-ins and goal kicks. This will allow a learning process for the players!
- 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.
- **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

Community

- 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 20 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 40 minutes with 2 x 20 min halves, with timeouts every 9 minutes.
- Estimated 4 x 9-minute substitution changes
- NOTE: 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!!

Development

- Festival formats will be used – 2 X 30-minute games
- Overall recommended duration of the game is a total of 30 minutes with 2 x 12 min halves with timeouts roughly every 6 minutes.
- Estimated 5 x 6-minute substitution changes per game
- NOTE: 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!!

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) or the halfway line (visible or imaginary) 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 own half 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 start the game.

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 (touchline), or if it hits the bleachers, goes into stands (stages), into player's benches, off a parent, or any other amenity considered by both coaches to be "Out-of-Play" the game is restarted by:
 - 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 touchline. The ball is in play as soon as it passes the touchline.
 - o If the ball goes over the goal line anywhere outside the goals area, depending on which team has touched the ball last, the game will be restarted with one of the following two scenarios:
 - A Goal Kick (considered a DIRECT- Free Kick) if the attacking team was the last team to touch the ball, taken within 2-3 yards from the goal line anywhere across the width of play at the nearest point it went out of play (or it can be taken from the crease line). 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.
 - A Corner Kick OR DRIBBLE-IN (considered a DIRECT- Free Kick) if the defending team was the last one to touch the ball, taken from the corner of the field (intersection of goal line with touch line) on the side the field the ball went out of play. The ball is in play as soon as the ball is touched.
- Opponents must be at least 4 yards away from the ball.

LAW #9 – KICK-IN/DRIBBLE-IN, GOAL KICK AND CORNER KICK

- There are three methods of restarting the play when the ball goes out of play:
 - o THE KICK IN OR DRIBBLE-IN – considered INDIRECT free kick, the ball must be passed before a goal is scored. The kick-in will be taken from the place where the ball went out of play with the opponents at least 4 yards away until the ball is in play. The player can choose to Dribble-In the ball from the point where the ball went out of play over the touchline. The ball is in play as soon as the ball is touched.
 - Rationale: 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.
 - o THE GOAL KICK – considered a DIRECT free kick, a goal can be scored from it. The goal kick will be taken within 2-3 yards from the goal line anywhere from inside the crease area (goal area). 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.
 - o A CORNER KICK OR DRIBBLE-IN - considered a DIRECT free kick, a goal can be scored from it. If the defending team was the last one to touch the ball, the corner kick will be taken from the corner of the field where the goal line meets the sideline (where available) or from next to the cone that marks the corner of the field. The corner kick will be taken from the same side of the field where the ball went out of play. The player can choose to Dribble-In from the corner spot. The ball is in play as soon as the ball is touched. The opponents must be at least 4 yards away from the ball until it is in play.
- The kicker of all these 3 types of kicks must not touch the ball a second time before anybody else touches the ball (teammate or opposing player).
- We do want to keep the game simple and fun, but we also do NOT want the kids to learn the "wrong" concepts. It is more difficult to erase a wrongly learnt perception (skill) and replace it with the right one, than to teach the right one in the first place. Letting the kids at U9 believe that it is fine if the ball goes out by 1 to 1.5 yards will create a wrong habit that will make the correct implementation harder later (U11)

LAW # 10 – 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 or an indirect free kick.
- No scores are recorded or kept at the age group.

LAW # 11 – 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. So, 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 the 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.

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.