

Hillandale Soccer League U8 Rules

Updated Nov 09

Modified from US YOUTH SOCCER; modifications in BOLD

US Youth Soccer Official Under 8 Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

The Field of Play

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 25 yards **maximum 60 yards**

Width: minimum 20 yards **maximum 40 yards**

At HSA, for this age group, the field dimensions are smaller to accommodate the six vs six (plus goalie) game, and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of six and seven-year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of four (4) yards is marked around it.

The center circle gives the players a concrete marking on where to be for the kick-off. The corner arc gives the young player a concrete place to put the ball to kick it back onto the field of play. While kids this young will execute corner kick plays to a modest degree, taking a kick from the corner is a reasonable way for them to put the ball into play and provides continuity with all other age groups. However, the center circle and the corner arc for U8 small sided games are not mandatory field markings.

The Goal Area: A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line three (3) yards from the inside each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of three (3) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

The Penalty Area: none.

Flagposts: none.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet. Goals may be smaller in dimension.

Players:

The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of **six** players plus a goalkeeper, for a total of seven players per side. Children in the U8 age group will intentionally play in pairs. The smaller number of players on the field will make it easier and more likely that passing and receiving will occur.

In the case of one team being “short” one or more players, coaches are encouraged to allow players from the team with sufficient numbers to ‘loan’ a player or two to the team that is short players and then PLAY.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.
Teams and matches are offered as coed and all-girl.

Playing Equipment:

Ball: Size three for this age group. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, dribbled and passed.

Uniform: Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Shinguards: Required on all players.

Format:

The Referee: An OFFICIAL (coach or parent) may be used. All infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

The Duration of the Match: The match shall be divided into four (4) equal, twelve (12) minute quarters. There shall be a two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA. Some U8 players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law. However, some U8 players have sufficient eye-hand coordination to attempt the throw-in. One ‘do-over’ per thrower should be the normal response if the throw-in is incorrect. The adult officiating the match should explain to the child how to execute the throw-in correctly.

The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Offside: None, except **“poaching” is not allowed and will be called as offside**. Poaching is when a player clearly makes no attempt to remain in an onside position and seeks to gain an advantage. Some coaches take advantage of the “no offsides” rule by instructing players to camp in front of the opponent’s goal – this will not be tolerated.

Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee/coach/parent must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct.

Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all kicks are direct and all opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

The Penalty Kick: None.

The Throw-In: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once.

The Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents must remain outside the goal area and at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play once it has left the goal area.

The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Scoring: No score or standings should be kept.

US Youth Soccer Recommendations

- Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
- No slide tackles to be allowed in this age group.