

Middlesex Youth Soccer League Rules for 8 v 8 Soccer (U12)

During a match, conformance will be with all FIFA Laws of the Game except as otherwise noted:

Law 1 – 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 70 yards maximum 80 yards

Width: minimum 45 yards maximum 55 yards

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 eight (8) yards is marked around it.

The Goal area: Conform to FIFA.

A goal area is defined at each end of the field by two lines drawn at right angles to the goal line, six (6) yards from the inside of each goal post. These lines extend into the field of play for six yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.

The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, fourteen (14) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of fourteen (14) 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 penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

(Penalty area regardless of Goal Size: 34 yards wide x 14 yards deep).

Flagposts: Conform to FIFA.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Conform to FIFA (With exception Minimum: 6 ft tall x 18 ft wide - maximum: 7 x 21 acceptable)

Law 2 – The Ball: Size four (4).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than eight players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start or continue if either team consists of fewer than seven players.

Substitutions: Conform to FIFA except:

a) In all age groups, an unlimited number of players may be substituted. Any substituted player may re-enter the match during subsequent substitutions.

b) All substitutes should enter and leave the field at the halfway line. Players on the field may be replaced by a substitute under one of the following conditions:

prior to any throw-in provided that the team in possession of the ball substitutes, and that the substitutes are located properly at the halfway line.

prior to a goal kick by either team,

after a goal by either team,

at half-time

at the time of a caution, the cautioned player may be substituted.

c) Substitutions may only be made with the referee's consent and only if the substitute players are ready to enter the game.

d) An injured player must be replaced if the referee stops the play for the injury. In such a case, the opposing team may have an equal substitution.

Law 4 – The Players Equipment: Conform to FIFA except:

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

a) Jersey or shirt must have a visible number

- b) The HOME team must change shirts, or wear pinnies, if both teams are wearing the same or similar (in the referee's opinion) color shirts.
- c) Shin guards are to be made of a suitable material in order to provide a reasonable degree of protection and must be covered completely by the stockings during the match.
- d) The footwear shall be soft soccer cleats or sneakers.
- e) Each goalkeeper shall wear colors that distinguish him/her from the other players and the referee.
- f) The following articles are not to be worn or allowed during a match:
 - jewelry of any type
 - all casts (even if padded)
 - any other equipment the referee determines is dangerous

Law 5 – The Referee: USSF Registered referee Grade 8 or higher must be assigned.

If the assigned referee has not appeared for the game within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the game may be played, as scheduled, with a referee agreed upon by the two coaches involved. Such substitute referee shall be paid the fee in accordance with Rule 32, provided that he/she submits a Referee Report.

Referees will be allowed to leave the field fifteen minutes after game time if one team cannot field seven (7) players

Law 6 – The Assistant Referee:
U.S.S.F. registered referees or club linesmen/women
(Grade 9 or higher may be assigned to U2 games).

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: Conform to FIFA with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) halves of thirty (30) minutes each. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

- a) The allowance for time lost in either period is at the discretion of the referee.
- b) There will be no overtime in regular season matches.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

- a) Before the match, each coach will hand to the referee two copies of the team's certified roster which must indicate each player's name, date of birth and shirt number and during the Spring season, identification card for themselves and each player properly stamped by the appropriate Commissioner. The referee shall legibly print/write his name on and pass on one copy of the team's certified roster to the opposing coach.

If either team fails to submit copies of the certified roster or identification cards before the match, the game will not be played.

- a) *Prior to the beginning of play, the referee shall summons a captain(s) from each team to the center of the field for the coin toss. The visiting team shall call the coin toss. The team that wins the coin toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match. The other team takes the kick-off to start the match. The team that wins the coin toss takes the kick-off to start the second half of the match.*
- b) *A kick-off is a way of starting (or restarting) play. All players shall be in their own half of the field. All players of the opposing team shall be at least ten (10) yards from the ball until it is in play. With the ball stationary on the center mark, the referee shall give a signal to start play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker shall not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player. A goal may be scored on a kick-off.*

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: Conform to FIFA.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is at ten yards and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight (8) yards from the penalty mark.

Law 15 – The Throw-In: Conform to FIFA.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is in play.