

MIDLANDS YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE

LAWS OF THE GAME

Revised: 1 January 2002

The Midlands Youth Soccer League (MYSL) will use the Laws of the Game published by the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) in the Illustrated Soccer Rules Guide. An abbreviated description of USSF and MYSL are marked with an asterisk (*).

LAW #1 – The Field of Play

*Recommended dimensions, see **Rule 3.1.** of the constitution.

The field of play shall be marked with lines, have a defined goal area, have a defined penalty area, have four corner flags and two goals which are placed on the center of each goal line.

LAW #2 – The Ball

- A. Grades 7 through 10 use a number **5** size leather ball
- A* Grades 5 and 6 use a number **4-** size leather ball
- B. Grades 1 through 4 use a number **4-**size leather ball
- C. Grades K-4 and K-5 use a number **3-**size leather ball

LAW #3 – Number of players

- *A. An official soccer game is played between two teams in **Group A and A*** with each team fielding no more than eleven (**11**) players and not less than eight (**8**) players. **Suggested team size: 15 players.**
An official soccer game is played between two teams in **Group B** with each team fielding no more than eight (**8**) and no less than seven (**7**) players.
Suggested team size: 12 players.
- B. A member of each team is designated goalkeeper with a uniform jersey color that is different from each of the other players.
- *C. A minimum of **eight (8)** players in Group A and **seven (7)** players in Group B constitutes a valid team. If, for any reason, a team fields less than eleven (11) players in Group A or eight (8) players in Group B the opposing side fields the same number of players plus one. Teams fielding less than 11 (Group A) and 8 (Group B) players in consecutive games must notify the commissioner in writing as to the reason.
- *D. The game results in a **forfeit** if after injuries or player ejections a team is **unable to field** eight (8) players in Group A or seven (7) players in Group B.

- *E. Eligible uniformed players present for the game must play at least half of each game, unless ill or injured or the opposing coach and referee must be notified prior to the game of the player's nonparticipation for disciplinary reasons.
- *F. Any number of substitutions may enter the game with prior notification of the referee
 - (1) Prior to a throw-in in your team's favor
 - (2) Prior to a goal-kick by either team
 - (3) After a goal by either team
 - (4) At half-time or between quarters
 - (5) After an injury for either team
- *G. Coaches **must have available** a complete team roster with player's names, birthdays and uniform numbers to be **provided to the referee** or opposing coach upon request.
- *H. Borrowing players to improve the strength of the team **is prohibited**.
- *I. When not be able to field the minimum required players a team may borrow other players (max 3), but when players from own team show, **borrowed players must be removed from play**.

LAW #4 – Players Equipment

- A. Player equipment includes shirt, stockings, shin guards and shoes. Sweatsuits, if used, are worn under soccer clothing.
- B. All players on a team (except the goalkeeper) must wear the same uniform (jersey and shorts).
- C. Opposing teams wear uniforms of contrasting colors. When a conflict of color occurs it is the home team's responsibility to change.
- D. Uniform jerseys are numbered on the back.
- E. Players **MUST** wear protective shin guards. Shin guards are to be worn under stockings.
- F. Non-detachable molded rubber cleats or tennis shoes may be worn.
- G. **No jewelry** may be worn by a player.
- H. No player may play with a cast or split
- I. Players (with glasses) must have safety glasses, goggles or a signed waiver to play.

LAW #5 – Referees

- A. Referee enforces the laws, keeps time and decides disputed points of the game. His/her jurisdiction begins when he/she signals for the kick-off and ends when the game is finished. His/her decisions are final. Games are not protestable because of rule interpretations by the referee. Rule interpretations should be requested in writing to the commission.

- B. A referee will be assigned for each game. Each team is responsible for providing one linesman per game. This individual is not to coach from the sidelines nor should they be someone whose attention can easily be distracted from the game. The referee will ask for a replacement for linesman not properly doing their job.
- C. If a referee fails to appear as scheduled the coaches may mutually agree upon the selection of an official or each team will provide a referee for one half of the game. The game will be played and this procedure will not be grounds for protest.

LAW #6 - Linesman

A linesman assists the referee and indicates when the ball goes out of play. He/she may designate either a throw-in, goal kick, or corner-kick.

LAW #7 – Duration of play

- A. Two halves or four quarters will be played. There will be a five (5) minute break at half time and two (2) minute breaks between quarters. Time is permitted to extend for a penalty kick at or after the expiration of any playing period.
- B. Playing times: See **Rule 5. 1.** of the constitution
- C. Overtime periods **will not** be played.

LAW #8 – Start of play

- A. A coin toss precedes the game. The team **winning the coin toss selects which goal they will defend.** The other team kicks off.
- B. A kick-off starts play at the beginning of each half/quarter and after each goal.
- C. Teams change ends of the field and ball possession at halftime.
- D. The kick-off is a direct kick and the **touching of the ball** puts it into play.
- E. Teams will forfeit if not ready to begin play within ten (10) minutes of the scheduled start time.
- F. Teams scheduled to compete must be represented for the duration of the game by a coach (or a person appointed in his/her place) or forfeit the game. A coach from teams in grades 1&2 is allowed on the field during the game (**1 max/team**). This coach is not to interfere with the referee or with play.
- G. The referee has the final decision as to whether or not to begin the game. The decision will be made at the field and will be based on field condition, weather and other pertinent factors.

LAW #9 – Ball in/out of play

- A. The ball is out of play when the whole ball crosses the goal or touchline on the ground or in the air and the referee stops play. The ball is in play when any part of the ball is touching the goal or touchlines.

LAW #10 – Method of scoring

- A. A goal is scored when the **whole ball** passes behind the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- B. The team scoring the most goals wins the game. Each goal counts one point.
- C. If both teams score the same number of goals the game ends in a tie.
- D. A forfeit results in a score of 1 – 0. No one is credited with the goal.

LAW #11 – Offside

- A. A player is in an off-side position if:
 - 1. He/She is nearer to his opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.
- B. A player is not in a offside position if:
 - 1. He/She is in his own half of the field of play.
 - 2. He/She is level with the second last opponent.
 - 3. He/She is level with the last two opponents.
- C. A player in an offside position is only penalized if:
 - 1. He/She is interfering with the play.
 - 2. He/She is interfering with an opponent.
 - 3. He/She is gaining an advantage being in that position
- D. There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from:
 - 1. A goal kick.
 - 2. A throw in.
 - 3. A corner kick.

For any offside offense, the referee awards an indirect free kick.

LAW # 12 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- A. A **direct free kick**(taken by the opposing team from the spot where the offense occurred) is awarded when a player intentionally commits any of the following:
 - 1. **Kicking or attempts to kick** an opponent
 - 2. **Tripping or attempts to trip** an opponent
 - 3. **Jumping** at a opponent
 - 4. **Violent or dangerous charging**
 - 5. **Charging from behind**
 - 6. **Striking** an opponent
 - 7. **Holding** an opponent
 - 8. **Pushing** an opponent
 - 9. **Handling the ball deliberately** (except the goalkeeper)
 - 10. **Spitting** at a opponent

- B. **Indirect free kicks** are awarded for the following infractions:
1. Playing the ball a second time before another player has played the ball on a throw-in, free kick, penalty-kick, corner-kick or goal kick.
 2. Offside or interference
 3. Goalkeeper carries the ball more than six (6) seconds without giving up possession or in Group A the goalkeeper picks the ball up after it has been intentionally kicked to him by a teammate. In such case the ball will be placed on the eighteen (18) yardline closest to the point of infraction.
 4. Charging the opponent away from the ball.
 5. Intentionally obstructing the opponent.
 6. Not kicking the ball forward on a penalty kick.
 7. Dangerous plays (high kicks).
 8. Charging the goalkeeper when he/she doesn't have the ball.
 9. Unsportsmanlike conduct.
- C. Attacking players are required to move away from the goalkeeper when he/she has possession of the ball and remain back until the ball has been thrown or punted.
- D. A player shall be cautioned and shown the **yellow card** if:
1. He/she persistently infringes on the Laws of the Game.
 2. He/she shows, by word/action, dissent from any decision given by the referee.
 3. He/she is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct.
- E. A player shall be sent off the field and shown the **red card** if he/she:
1. Is guilty of **violent play**.
 2. Is guilty of **serious foul play**.
 3. Uses foul or **abusive language**.
 4. Is guilty of a **second cautionable offense** after receiving a caution.
- F. Any player shown the red card will sit out the remainder of the game and will suit up and attend, but not play, in one additional game before being allowed to play again.

LAW #13 – Free Kicks.

- A. There is two types of free kicks. A direct free kick scores a goal directly against the opposing team. An indirect free kick scores a goal only if another player, other than the kicker has touched the ball, before the ball crosses the goal line.
- B. Players of the opposing teams must be ten (10) yds away from the spot of the kick.
- C. The ball must be stationary when kicked and touching it puts the ball in play.

LAW #14 – Penalty kick

- A. A penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team when a player on the defending team commits any of the nine (9) fouls listed in LAW #12, in the penalty area.
- B. The penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark. All players except the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper must be on the field, but outside the penalty area.
- C. The goalkeeper must stand on his own goal line, between the goal posts, until the ball is kicked. He/she is allowed to move parallel along the goal line.

LAW #15 – Throw-in

- A. A throw-in is awarded after the whole ball crosses over the touchline on the ground or in the air. The throw-in is taken by the team opposite to that of the player who last touched the ball.
- B. The thrower, at the moment of delivery, must face the playing field and a part of each foot must be on the ground on or behind the touchline. The ball must be brought from behind the head and thrown equally with both hands.
- C. On an improper throw-in a throw-in will be awarded to the opposing team. A goal cannot be scored from a throw-in. In grades 1 & 2 a second throw-in will be awarded if the first one is incorrect. If that throw-in is incorrect the opposing team will be awarded a throw-in.

LAW #16 - Goal-kick

- A. A goal-kick is awarded the defending team if the ball passes **completely over the goal line**, outside the goal posts, after last having been touched by an offensive player
- B. A defensive player takes the goalkick from a point anywhere along the six yard line.
- C. All opposing team players must be outside the penalty area and the kick must clear the penalty area before the ball is in play, or the kick is taken again. In grades 1&2 if the second attempt does not clear the penalty area the ball will be spotted at approximately the 12-yard line for the next attempt.

LAW #17 - Corner-kick

- A. A corner-kick is awarded to the offensive team if the ball passes completely across the goal line, outside the goalposts, and was last touched by a defensive player.
- B. The corner-kick is taken from the quarter circle nearest the spot where the ball crossed the goal line. A goal may be scored from a cornerkick.

LAW #18 - Goalkeeper

- A. Teams in Group B may kick the ball to their goalkeeper and he/she is allowed to pick the ball up.
- B. Teams in Group A may kick the ball to their goalkeeper, but he/she **may not** pick up the ball. Only when the ball is played back by chest or head.

- C. The goalkeeper in Group A and Group B can take unlimited steps to put the ball back in play after he has possession (control) of the ball. This has to be done within six (6) seconds, after possession of the ball. (The goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball by touching it with any part of his hand or arms.)
- D. In Group B control of the ball means both hands on the ball.