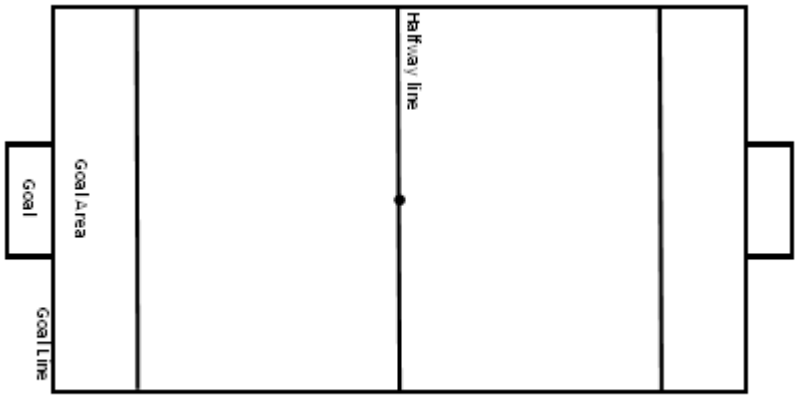
SYSA Soccer
Modified Rules of Competition
4 v 4 (U6 and U7) Outdoor Recreational Soccer

SYSA Mission: "To provide sports activities for all youth where everyone plays, develops skills, is taught good sportsmanship, and learns the value of being a team player."

All competitions shall be governed by the Rules as stated herein in all cases where they are applicable. All members of SYSA shall be governed by these Rules of Competition. These rules are modified from the FIFA Laws of the Game.
Good judgment, sportsmanship, and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of players, coaches, referees, and spectators. The spirit of the game should be considered in all decisions.
These rules are subject to changes/edits as needed.

Law 1 Field of Play
See diagram below.
The following specifications apply to all **4v4** competitions administered by SYSA.
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 length **25** yards - maximum length is **35** yards
Width: minimum width is **15** yards - maximum width is **20** yards
Field markings.
The field of play is divided into two halves by a **halfway line**.
Goal Area: **6-yard line** drawn from sideline to sideline
Penalty area: none
Corner arc: none. On a corner kick, the ball may be placed anywhere within 1 yard of the corner.
Goals: **4'x 6'** Goals will be placed on the center of each goal line. In case permanent goals are not available, flags or cones may be used to mark the goals (6 feet wide). If cones are used for goals, the top of the player's hands will determine the "imaginary" height of the crossbar. For the players' safety, no one should hang from the crossbar of the goal at any time during a game or practice.
Each team, its coaches, players, and spectators shall be on **opposite** sides of the field. The designated home team shall have a choice of sides.
Players, coaches, and spectators should not be along the goal area touchline or be behind the goal line.
A game may be postponed at the field site if weather conditions are too hazardous for play. Extreme weather includes lightning, heavy snow, or ice on the ground. Rain is not a reason to postpone play.
No dogs or pets are allowed near the playing field.



4 v 4 Field
U6 & U7

Law 2 The Ball
A size **three (3)** ball will be used for all practices and games.
The home team is responsible for providing the game ball.

Law 3 The Players
The match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than **four (4)** players. There are no goalkeepers.
The maximum team roster is **eight (8).** Each player shall receive 50% of the total playing time. The coach is responsible for enforcing this rule.
Teams may not place a defender in front of the goal to try and prevent the opposing team from scoring.
Defenders may remain in their half of the field to teach basic positioning, but defenders will not be allowed to simply remain within a few yards of the goal at all times.
Substitutions may be made during any stoppage of play.
Substitutions will be allowed to ensure all players receive equal playing time.
Many teams make a "line change" at the mid-point of each quarter (4 min). The four players on the field exit quickly when the ball is stopped nearest the 4-minute mark, and the other 4 players quickly enter the game.
Allow each set of 4 players to play for 4 minutes. This is not an opportunity for a team huddle.
Players not on the field of play must remain two (2) yards behind the touchline and not along the goal area or behind the goal line.

Law 4 Player Equipment
Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game.
A minimum "official" uniform is the standard SYSA-issued jersey with number and socks.
Shin guards are MANDATORY for practices and games. Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
Safety. A player must not use equipment or wear anything dangerous to themself or another player.
Accessories are permitted as long as they are not dangerous and are safely and securely covered. Dangerous items must be removed and not taped or covered. No earrings.
All or any member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects provided that: (1) The team uniform jersey is worn outermost; and (2) any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; and (3) referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.
No player shall be allowed to play in any regularly scheduled practice or game with an injury or a known medical condition that can be exacerbated by playing.
Prosthetic devices require a physician's permission before a player may play, and it must state that the player needs to wear the device to play. Even then, such devices must pose no danger to other players on the field. The referee's judgment shall be the final determining factor.

Law 5 The Referee
A parent or coach from each team will officiate the games. Both co-officials will work together and coach /referee the match on the field. This maximizes the opportunity for coaches to help the players with the rules of the game. Coaches can give lots of high-fives and fist bumps.
It shall be the responsibility of the officials for the game to encourage clean competition and good sportsmanship at all times and to enforce the rules and regulations. All infringements should be explained to the player.
The coach/parent refereeing the game will ensure that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from the coach/parent refereeing the game, who is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped.

Law 6 Other Officials
None.

Law 7 Duration of the Match
Four (4) x eight (8) minute quarters with 1-minute quarter breaks and a 5-minute halftime break. However, a very quick stoppage of time at the four-minute mark in each period is permitted for substitutions. This is the ONLY time the game clock is stopped for a quick substitution.
Matches are scheduled every 70 minutes. Please start and stop your games on time.

Law 8 Start and Restart of Play
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, that the defending team is at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play.
A goal shall not be scored directly from a free kick/kickoff/corner kick without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team.
If the play is stopped, the play will be restarted with a drop ball for the team that last touched the ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. All players, except the player receiving the drop ball, must be 4.5 yards away. The ball shall be deemed "in play" when the ball has touched the ground. The player taking the drop ball cannot score a goal directly from a drop ball.
Kick-off: The kick-off starts both halves of a match. The visiting team takes the kick-off to start the first half, and the home team takes the kick-off to start the second half. A kick-off restarts the play after a goal is scored. The opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be on or behind their 6-yard line at the kick off.

Law 9 Ball in and out of play
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the game.
The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the whole goal line or whole touchline, whether the ball is on the ground or in the air. "The whole ball over the whole line."
The ball is out of play when the referee has stopped the game.

Law 10 Method of Scoring
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.
A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air between the goal posts and under the crossbar.
If cones are used for markers, the height of the crossbar will be determined by the height of the goalkeeper's hands.
There will be no published team standings, and game scores will not be recorded.

Law 11 Offside
None. The offside rule will not apply to any 4 v 4 match; however, the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal, irrespective of the location of the ball on the field, is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play (an indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach).

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game. Play should be stopped when a player acts in a careless, reckless, or dangerous manner. The volunteer coach/official should explain the infringement to the player. Play is restarted with an **indirect** free kick for the opposing team.
Fouls against an opponent may include: charges, jumps at, kicks or attempts to kick, pushes, strikes or attempts to strike, tackles or challenges, trips or attempts to trip, holds an opponent, impedes an opponent with contact, or spits at an opponent. *Deliberately* handling the ball is a foul.
No heading.
No slide tackling.
Not every touch of the ball to a player's hand or arm is an offense. Consider: Was it deliberate or an accident?
Misconduct: No cards shall be shown to this age group. A referee may ask a player to temporarily sub out if the behavior would have warranted a misconduct.
If a player is too rambunctious, the referee should ask the coach to make a substitution to allow the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

Law 13 Free Kicks
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that all free kicks are indirect and the opponents must be at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is kicked.
A goal cannot be scored from an INDIRECT free kick unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.
The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

Law 14 Penalty Kicks
None. Penalty kicks will not be awarded at this age level.

Law 15 Throw In
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game. The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the whole touchline, whether the ball is on the ground or in the air.
The throw-in shall be taken from the point where it crossed the touchline by a player of the opposing team.
The thrower must face the field of play and must keep both feet on the ground (on or behind the touchline) while releasing the ball. He/she shall use both hands on both sides of the ball to deliver the ball from behind and over his/her head.
Several **do-overs** may be allowed if an incorrect throw-in occurs. Before the re-throw, the referee will instruct the thrower on proper technique and then proceed with the throw in.
The thrower may not play the ball until another player has touched it. If the thrower plays the ball a second time before another player has touched it, the above re-throw rules will apply.
A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw-in.

Law 16 Goal Kick
When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the players on the attacking team, a goal kick will be awarded.
A goal kick may be taken from anywhere inside the goal area by any member of the defending team.
The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
The ball is in play when it is kicked.
The opposing team must move behind the **halfway line** until the team puts the ball into play. The team may choose to restart play before the opponents have retreated behind the halfway line.

Law 17 Corner Kick
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the ball shall be placed in the corner of the field and the opposing players must be at least **ten (10) feet** from the ball until it is kicked. When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the defending team, a player of the attacking team shall have a corner kick.
The ball shall be placed in the **general vicinity** of the corner and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player.
In a **4v4** match, a goal may **not** be scored directly from a corner kick.
The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

Miscellaneous Rules

Team Responsibilities

Teams that are the "first game of the day" may help prepare the field (mini goals placed for the 4v4 games or corner flags placed for the 7v7/9v9 games).
Teams who are the "last game of the day" should help clean up the field (store mini goals, store field signs and/or put away the corner flags).
All teams are responsible for the clean-up after each game. Please do not leave garbage on the fields.
Opposing coaches and players are encouraged to shake hands, fist bump or give high-fives after each match.
Please help put away the field signs and goals if you are in the last game of the day.

Parents and Spectators should enjoy and encourage the players' efforts and refrain from coaching during the match. Please cheer and acknowledge players who exhibit good sportsmanship.
Team tunnels: Create a team tunnel to celebrate the athletes after the match (it's their favorite thing after the snack!;)

Coach Responsibilities

The coach or designated adult should attend every practice and every game. All coaches, team managers, and assistants must comply with all Risk Management requirements. There must be an approved adult at all functions.
The coach shall collect a WYS Medical Release form, available on the SYSA website, signed by the parent/guardian for all players and have access to these forms at all practices and games.
Assistants or spectators are not allowed on the field of play during the game unless permission is given by the referee (emergencies or unusual situations).
The coach is responsible for their behavior as well as that of their players, parents, and spectators on his/her side of the field. Remember, this is for fun!
Every player must play in each game at least 50% of the playing time unless they are unable to play due to illness or injury.
Coaching from the sidelines is permitted but not recommended. Coaching must be done civilly, and the tone of voice will be informational and encouraging, not demanding or critical.
Make sure that your players are properly equipped and ready to play. No jewelry/earrings (no taped jewelry)
In case of injuries during the game, ensure that the player is properly attended to. Check his/her condition after the game and follow up with a call to the home in the evening.
In the event an injured player requires medical attention, he/she must have a written release from the doctor before returning to practice or play with the team.
A coach shall complete an Incident Report, available on the SYSA website, and submit it to the SYSA office within 48 hours of injury/incidence.

Practices

Only **one (1)** practice per week for forty-five (45) minutes – sixty (60) minutes is recommended for this age level.

Reviewed August 2026