

Swanton Soccer Club

U-8 Recreation Rules

Number of Players on the field: 6 per team (including the goalie)

****Strictly enforce—more than this is not good at this age.**

Equipment: Purple/White Jersey (can have shirt under if too cold), shin guards with socks covering, soccer shorts (pants if too cold), soccer cleats or tennis shoes. The goalie must be distinguishable from all other players on both teams. Jewelry must also be removed.

Duration of Game: 2--20 minute halves plus a 5-minute half time.

Start and Re-start: Kick-off at the beginning of each half (alternate teams) and after a goal is scored. This is a DIRECT kick. The player kicking-off cannot touch the ball a 2nd time until it is touched by another player (from either team). At this age, explain what they did and have them re-do the kick-off.

Ball In and Out of Play: The ball is out of play if it COMPLETELY crosses the sideline (length) or the end line (width).

- If the ball crosses the sideline, a throw-in is taken by the opposing player at the place the ball left the field.

 - both feet on the ground

 - throw ball with both hands over the head

 - at this age level, if the player does not throw in correctly, have him/her re-do the throw, making sure to explain what he/she did.

 - a goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in

 - the thrower cannot touch the ball again until it is touched by another player. Result in indirect kick by opposing team.

- If the ball crosses the end line by the offensive team, a goal kick is taken (any player may take the kick—does NOT have to be goalie)

 - must completely leave the penalty box before any other player touches the ball. Re-do the goal kick if necessary.

- If the ball crossed the end line by a defending player, a corner kick is taken at the closest corner. A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.

Hand-Balls: This can be a confusing rule for parents to understand. It is considered a hand-ball if the ball is handled anywhere from the shoulder to the fingers. If a ball is thrown or kicked and it hits the player, it is not considered a hand-ball. The referee will be the judge in determining if it was accidental contact or deliberate. ***A deliberate hand ball will be awarded a direct kick from the location of the foul.***

- a goalie can also receive a hand-ball if he/she handles the ball outside of the penalty area. (Once the goalie leaves the penalty box, he/she becomes a regular player and cannot use his/her hands)

Other fouls: A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent. *Anything that is deliberate is awarded a **direct kick*** from the location of the foul. Bumping or going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for a ball is *not a foul* until the hands or elbows come up.
-A referee may also play “advantage” when the offensive team clearly would benefit from the foul not being called.

Direct vs. Indirect:

- Direct kicks can result in a goal being scored directly from the kick
---awarded for **deliberate/intentional** fouls/hand-balls
- Indirect kicks cannot result in a goal until a 2nd player (from either team) has touched the ball.

Penalty Kick (aka “PK”): A penalty kick results from a contact foul or hand ball by the defending team within the penalty area – the large box on either end of the field. So it’s a type of direct kick also.

- All players must remain outside the penalty area and the penalty arc until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked.
- If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off of the goal or the keeper and stays on the field, the ball is “live” and anyone can play it.
- Please remember this is U8 and unintentional fouls may be awarded an indirect by the referee.

Offside: None at U8. If an offensive player is hanging out by the goal (aka “cherry-picking”), encourage the player to move up/away. Coaches should encourage players to not do this. If, in the opinion of the referee, a coach is intentionally putting a player in this position to gain a scoring advantage, then the offside call may be made.

Drop-Ball: A drop ball occurs when the referee needs to stop the game for any reason not listed in the rules (ie. an injury)

Substitutions: Can be made by either team at any time there is a stoppage in play. Please send all players that you want to substitute into the game to the CENTER LINE and wait for the referee to signal them on the field.

Scoring: The ball must COMPLETELY cross the end line inside the goal.

Pass-Back: The only time a goalie cannot pick up the ball inside the penalty box is called a “pass-back” in which a player on the same team as the goalie passes it back to the goalie. At this age level, be lenient with this rule. If it is intentional, then award an indirect kick from the point of the infraction. If it appears, unintentional, then allow goalie to pick it up and play on.

Referees: Remember that in many situations in soccer, the call is made in the opinion of the referee. The referee’s decision is FINAL. Arguing with, yelling at, or making sarcastic comments to, a referee is not going to change a call and is a bad example to set for the players. Referees have been told to stop the game and not allow it to continue if a coach or other spectator is causing a disturbance.