



Soccer League Rules and Regulations Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd Grade



Rev. August 2021/JH

Bartlett Park District
700 S. Bartlett Road, Bartlett IL 60103
Tel: (630) 540-4800 Fax: (630) 540-4870
bartlettparks.org
teamsideline.com/bartlettparkdistrict
facebook.com/BPDYouthSports/

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1. **SECTION ONE: GENERAL RULES**

- a. PLAYING RULES AND ELIGIBILITY – FIFA rules apply if not modified within. The In-House Soccer Program rules are strictly adhered to and enforced by all park district staff.
- i. All soccer players will register and play at their current grade level unless otherwise approved by park district personnel.
 - ii. Requests to “play up” will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The program’s philosophy is to play children in age/grade-appropriate divisions in the best interest of their overall athletic development and for the program’s social aspects.
 1. Requests to play up are a case-by-case basis, but to be considered to play up a child must be within a one-year grade level to be approved. For example, a 1st grader can only play up at 2nd grade.
 - iii. Any youth meeting the league requirements will be eligible to participate.
- b. SPORTSMANSHIP, TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, PROFANITY, JEWELRY - Managers and coaches must ensure their conduct is proper in every respect and must make sure that their players and spectators do the same. Tobacco use is strictly prohibited on the playing field, on the players’ bench, and by any player. Alcoholic beverages and any substance abuse in any form are strictly prohibited within the confines of the parks. The use of profanity and obscene gestures by any player, manager, coach, referee, spectator, family member, or parent/guardian is prohibited. Players will be prohibited from wearing any form of jewelry. Players found to be wearing jewelry will be told to remove it by the referee. Medical alert bracelets, necklaces, or religious items are not considered to be jewelry but must be secured to the body.
- c. COACHES – All coaches are volunteers. The coaches’ primary goal is to prepare the player to successfully recognize and solve the game’s challenges on their own. Coaches must approach soccer with this in mind. All coaches are responsible for setting a positive example for players by displaying good sportsmanship and respecting the game’s rules. Disciplinary action will be taken against any coach who does not support the positive mission of the program.
- d. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY - All parents/guardians and coaches will be required to sign a Code of Conduct
- i. Parents must shoulder responsibility and take the initiative to make the program successful. Each parent should join in the total effort. There is an opportunity for all to participate. Parents, spectators, and family members must ensure their conduct is proper in every respect and display GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP.
 - ii. Each coach is ultimately responsible for the conduct of their team’s spectators. If there is a problem with disruptive spectators, the referee is to warn the coach of the offending

spectators. The coach shall then speak to the involved parties to rectify the situation. Should this fail, the spectators may be asked to leave the field, and the coach may receive a yellow or red card. In extreme cases, the referee can suspend the game.

e. CLEAN-UP - All coaches, players, and parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring all garbage is appropriately disposed of at the end of all games and practices. This includes school and church fields as well as Park District fields. Please help keep our fields, stands, and parking lot areas clean.

f. SCHEDULING

i. SEASON SCHEDULE – The league plays outdoor soccer. As such, play is separated into fall and spring seasons. The fall season runs from roughly mid-August until mid-October. The spring season runs from roughly the beginning of April until the beginning of June. Each season will have 8 scheduled games.

ii. SCHEDULE CHANGES - There will be no changes in a team's scheduled game date, time, or location unless authorized by the Recreation Manager. All games scheduled at the start of the season should be played as expected except for the following circumstances:

1. In the event of Park District cancellation due to inclement weather
2. In the event of school or religious activities
3. In the event of Park District needing to cancel for other reasons
4. It is not acceptable or permitted to request a game reschedule for the following reasons:
 - a. Too few players – Games will be played short-sided, or players will be borrowed from the opposing team.
 - b. Coach and/or assistant is unable to make the game – Parent should be recruited to coach

iii. RESCHEDULING OF RAIN OUTS AND SUSPENDED GAMES - The Recreation Manager overseeing the Soccer League will attempt to reschedule all games; however, reschedules are not guaranteed. In the event of a reschedule, the home coach must communicate with the away coach to confirm a date and time that works for both teams. Once both teams have agreed upon a reschedule date and time, the home team must report back to the Recreation Manager on the agreed-upon reschedule date and time. All rescheduled games must be scheduled at least one week out so a referee can be secured for the game (unless specifically approved by park district personnel), or a forfeit will result.

i. GAMES PER WEEK – Teams will typically play only one game per week. At certain times the schedule may require two. Games will be played on Saturdays. In cases of a make-up game or an odd number of teams in a division, it shall be understood that a weeknight may be

preferable to complete the schedule. Weeknights will only be used if necessary to complete the game schedule.

- ii. PRACTICES - No team is permitted to begin practicing before rosters have been officially distributed at the coaches meeting and before the parents have signed the medical release form and code of conduct. Practices may be restricted from specific game fields.

2. **SECTION 2 - PLAYERS, FIELD, AND EQUIPMENT**

- a. PLAYER ATTENDANCE - Players are encouraged to attend all games and practices. If a player cannot partake in a practice or a game, a courtesy call/text should be made to the coach.
- b. PLAYER SHARING – Games will not be rescheduled for teams that will be short players, except in extreme situations outlined in the rescheduling section (1.F.ii) of this manual. If a coach expects that their team may be short players for a scheduled game, the coach may choose from the following options:
 - i. The coach can request that both teams play with fewer players on the field. The opposing coach is not required to comply. However, good sportsmanship guidelines dictate that they should.
 - ii. The coach can ask the opposing team to “loan” players to make up the difference so that both teams can field complete teams. The opposing coach, if they choose to help, would select players to be shared. “Borrowing” coach can provide pinnies or jerseys for “loaned” players.
 - iii. The team that is short players may borrow from a team of the same age level that has played within one hour of the scheduled game.
- c. EQUIPMENT - All players must wear their issued team uniform during the game. In the event of a color conflict (e.g., Dark Gray vs. Black jerseys), the home team is responsible for wearing pinnies/vests or alternate colors.
 - i. In cold weather, players will be able to wear sweatshirts, jackets, and/or long pants under their uniforms. Gloves and hats are allowed.
 - ii. Jerseys must be tucked in.
 - iii. Shin guards are MANDATORY.
 - iv. Footwear - Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes are acceptable, but soccer cleats are recommended. No metal spikes, football, or baseball cleats are allowed.
- d. SUBSTITUTIONS - There are unlimited substitutions during the course of a game. Substitutions can occur only with the referee’s consent.

- i. Substitutions may occur during any of the following occasions: between quarters/halves, either team's throw-in, team's goal kick, after a scored goal, after an injury, and when play is stopped.
- e. PLAYING TIME - Each player shall play a minimum of 50% of the game, providing equal playing time for all players.
- f. AGE-SPECIFIC RULES

KINDERGARTEN SOCCER	
Field Size	30 x 25 (approx)
Number of Players	4v4 (no goalie)
Recommended Formation	1-2-1 (one defender, 2 midfield players, and 1 forward)
Duration of Game	4 x 10 minute quarters
Half Time	5 minutes and 3 minutes between quarters
Ball	Size 3
Referee	No Official Referee (2 x Coaches)
Coaches	One from each team on the field to act as referee and one from each team on the sideline
Score	Not recorded
Heading	No heading in practices or games.
Substitutions	Either team's goal kick, throw-in, after a goal and in between quarters and halftime
Goal Kicks	Taken from the midpoint in the goal box
Offside	None
Free Kicks	All direct. Always taken outside the box.
Penalty Kicks	None
Time Outs	None, the clock must run continuously throughout the game
1ST GRADE SOCCER	
Field Size	40 x 30 (approx)
Number of Players	5v5 (four on the field plus a goalie – 5 players total including the GK)
Recommended Formation	GK-2-2 (GK+ 2 defenders, 2 midfield) or GK-1-2-1 (GK+1 defender, 2 midfield & 1 forward)
Duration of Game	4 x 12 minute quarters
Half Time	5 minute half time and 2 minutes between quarters
Ball	Size 3
Referee	One, assigned by BPD
Coaches	Two on the sideline, third may act as a linesman (not coaching), none allowed on the field
Score	Recorded by the referee but standings not kept
Heading	No heading in practices or games.
Substitutions	Either team's goal kick, throw-in, after a goal and in between quarters and halftime
Goal Kicks	Taken from the edge of the goal box
Offside	None, but players shouldn't be encouraged to stand in an offside position
Free Kicks	All direct. Always taken outside the box.
Penalty Kicks	None
Time Outs	None, the clock must run continuously. Referees discretion to add time for game delays
2ND GRADE SOCCER	
Field Size	40 x 30 (approx)
Number of Players	5v5 (four on the field plus a goalie – 5 players total including the GK)
Recommended Formation	GK-2-2 (2 defenders, 2 midfield) or GK-1-2-1 (1 defender, 2 midfield, and 1 forward)
Duration of Game	4 x 12 minute quarters
Half Time	5 minute half time and 2 minutes between quarters
Ball	Size 3
Referee	One, assigned by BPD
Coaches	Two on the sideline, third may act as a linesman (not coaching), none allowed on the field

Score	Recorded by the referee but standings not kept
Heading	No heading in practices or games.
Substitutions	Either team's goal kick, throw-in, after a goal and in between quarters and halftime
Goal Kicks	Taken from the edge of the goal box
Offside	None, but players shouldn't be encouraged to stand in an offside position
Free Kicks	All direct. Always taken outside the box.
Penalty Kicks	None
Time Outs	None, the clock must run continuously. Referees discretion to add time for game delays

- g. COURTESY RULE / SLAUGHTER RULE - The slaughter rule dictates that if a team is winning by three (3) goals, the coach in the lead should begin to pull back their players. When up by four (4) goals, the losing team must add a player, and when up by six (6) goals, the winning team must remove a player. Coaches are not allowed to remove the goalie from the field. Referees will be responsible for ensuring that the proper steps are taken in a slaughter situation. **This is not optional for either the winning or losing coach.**
- h. COACHING/SPECTATOR PRESENCE - A total of one (1) head coach and one (1) assistant coach may occupy the team's side of the field. No one other than the coaches and players is allowed on the player side of the field. All parents/spectators must remain on the opposing side of the field behind the 8-foot courtesy line. No one is allowed behind either goal during the game.
- i. CASTS – A player with a cast must submit a medical release signed by their doctor to the park district. Players may play with a soft "cast" if the cast is not a hazard to the individual or any other player on the field, in the referee's opinion. Soft casts must include at least one inch of foam padding on either side of the cast.

3. SECTION 3 - REFEREES

a. KINDERGARTEN

- i. Games will be "officiated" by team coaches. Two coaches, one from either team, are permitted on the field to help direct players. One coach should assume the role of referee and control the game in a way appropriate to that age group, teaching the game's rules to the best of their ability. Coaches should referee two quarters each per game.

b. 1ST & 2ND GRADE

- i. All games will be officiated by a referee who is IHSA or USSF certified. All referees will be required to familiarize themselves with age-specific Soccer League rules. League rules shall supersede all others where they apply – otherwise, FIFA rules apply. Each referee has the authority to rule on any point not covered explicitly in the age-specific house rules or FIFA rules. There will be at least one referee at all games.
- ii. If by ten minutes after the scheduled game time, the referee has not arrived and you have attempted to email the Recreation Manager and/or call the park district, coaches can agree

- that they will officiate the game. If they do so, they will take the field, and each coach should officiate one-half of the game. The coaches will then be responsible for officiating the game to the best of their ability.
- iii. All referees' decisions are considered final and not subject to dispute by coaches, players, or spectators.
 - iv. A coach can respectfully request an explanation of a call at halftime or following the game. The referee may respond at their discretion. However, a referee is not required to explain any call.
 - v. No one is allowed to argue judgment calls with the referee. Doing so is grounds for ejection via red card. Should an infraction take place that demands showing a red card to a coach- The coach must leave the park promptly upon designating a responsible adult from their team to finish the game.
 - vi. Physical contact with a referee is not permitted and will not be tolerated. Anyone making contact with a referee will be immediately ejected and suspended from further participation in all Park District programs pending review of the incident by the park district staff. It shall also be noted that physical contact with a referee can be reported to the police department.
 - vii. Questions and/or comments regarding referees are to be directed to park district staff.
 - viii. Referees will note any incidents that occur during a game on their game card. Incidents will then be followed up by the park district.

4. **SECTION 4 - GAME RULES**

a. STARTING A GAME

- i. The home team shall provide the game ball.
- ii. Each game will begin with a kick-off in the center circle of the field.

- b. PROTESTED and/or APPEALED GAMES - There will be no protested games. There will be no appeals. The referee's decision/ruling is absolute and final.

c. PLAYING CONDITIONS

- i. Darkness/Rain
 - 1. A game stopped due to darkness or rain is at the referee's discretion.
 - 2. Any game stopped due to darkness or rain during the first half of the game is not an official game. The game will restart with the score being zero – zero (0-0).
 - 3. Any game stopped during the second half of the game will be over, and the team leading at that point is considered the winner.

ii. Poor Playing Conditions

1. In the event of poor playing conditions and/or bad weather, the Park District will decide if the game(s) should be played. Once the game has started, only the referee can stop the game.

iii. Electrical and Thunderstorms/Emergency Sirens/Thorguard - If lightning is seen, if thunder is heard, or if the park district severe weather warning signals/sirens/Thorguard goes off (15-second blast), the following must be strictly adhered to.

1. All games and practices must be stopped, and the players cleared from the field/park. Any coach refusing to comply will be immediately suspended until the Recreation Manager reviews the incident.
 - a. At locations with the park district's severe weather warning system (Thorguard), wait for the all-clear (3 short horn blasts). If the all-clear has not sounded after 30 minutes, the game or practice must be canceled.
 - b. At locations that do not have the park district severe weather warning system (Thorguard), there will be a mandatory twenty (20) minute wait, from the last lightning seen or thunder heard, to see if the storm passes before any play can be resumed. However, the game or practice must be canceled if the severe weather has continued for thirty (30) minutes.

Note: The mandatory twenty (20) minute wait must be free of lightning and thunder. For example, if lightning is seen after five (5) minutes of waiting, the mandatory (20) minute wait will restart from the last lightning strike seen.

2. At the referee's discretion, coaches and players will take shelter inside a vehicle or building. If the storm passes at the referee's discretion, the game can restart from where it left off, provided the field is playable and weather conditions are safe.
3. For practices, the coaches are responsible for making these decisions.

d. PLAYER INJURY

- i. In case of an injury, play will stop when the referee blows the whistle. The whistle will be blown when the team with the injured player has possession of the ball. In severe instances, play will immediately stop.
- ii. All players shall take a knee while the injured player is being attended to.

e. BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

i. Out of play

1. The ball is out of play when it fully crosses the touchline on the ground or in the air.
2. The referee has stopped play.

ii. In-Play

1. The ball rebounds from a goalpost, crossbar, or corner flag and remains in the field of play.
2. The ball rebounds from the referee when they are on the field of play.

f. OFFSIDE

- i. There is no offside called in Kindergarten, 1st or 2nd Grade.
- ii. Coaches are advised to teach the basics of offside in 2nd Grade and encourage trying to play on-side during games towards the end of the season. Please do not encourage playing offside on purpose (cherry-picking).

g. HEADING - Per US Soccer, as of February 2016.

i. Players in U11 ((3rd/4th Grade) programs and younger shall not engage in heading the soccer ball during practices or games.

1. When a player deliberately heads the ball in the game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the infraction. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infraction occurred. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

h. BUILD OUT LINES – Per US Soccer, as of Spring 2016 (adopted in Fall 2016)

i. This rule applies to 1st and 2nd Grade Leagues only.

- ii. The Build Out Lines are marked on the field approximately 4 feet in front of both goalkeeper boxes' edge.
- iii. When the GK is in possession of the ball (either during play or on a goal kick), the opposing team must drop behind the Build Out Line allowing the GK to pass, throw, or roll the ball to a teammate.
 1. After the ball is put into play and the first player (other than the GK) on the team with possession touches the ball, the opposing team can cross the Build Out Line, and play can resume as normal.
- iv. GK's are not permitted to punt the ball.

1. If the GK does punt, restart with the GK.
- v. A restart from the GK's hands or goal kick will occur if the opposition infringes inside the Build Out Line.
- i. THROW-INS
 - i. Throw-ins are handled in the following manner:
 1. When the whole ball passes over the touchline, either on the ground or in the air.
 2. Throw-in is taken from the point where it crossed the touchline.
 3. It is awarded to the opponents of the last team that touched the ball.
 - j. CORNER KICKS - Corner kicks are to be performed when the ball crosses the backline out-of-bounds on the field and is sent there by the defending team. The attacking team takes the corner kick from the corner circle.
 - k. GOAL KICKS - A goal kick is awarded when the ball crosses the backline and is sent there by the attacking team. The defending team takes the goal kick from the edge of the goal box.
- l. PENALTY KICKS
 - i. There are no penalty kicks in the K, 1st, and 2nd Grade leagues. All kicks must be taken from outside the area and must be direct.
- m. FREE KICK
 - i. Every kick is direct in the K, 1st, and 2nd Grade leagues.
 - ii. Slide tackling is not permitted. Any offense will result in a direct free kick being awarded to the opposing team.
- n. METHOD OF SCORING - A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses the goal line between posts and beneath the crossbar.
- o. DURATION OF A GAME
 - i. The game shall be divided into four equal quarters
 1. Kindergarten: 4 x 10 minute quarters
 - a. There shall be a break between quarters of three (3) minutes and five (5) minutes between halves.
 2. 1st & 2nd Grade: 4 x 12 minute quarters
 - a. There shall be a break between quarters of two (2) minutes and five (5) minutes between halves.

p. MISCONDUCT - A referee's method to indicate misconduct on behalf of a coach is by showing a Yellow Card or a Red Card.

i. There are no cards used in the K, 1st, and 2nd Grade Leagues for players. There is, however, a time-out used for exuberant players.

1. Yellow Card

a. If a coach receives a yellow card, it shall be warranted as a warning.

2. Red Card

a. If a coach receives a red card, the coach shall immediately be removed from the game. A suspension shall follow for the next scheduled game.

b. Suspension - The coach shall not be permitted to attend the next game as a coach or spectator.

q. ENDING THE GAME - Upon completing the game, both teams and coaches shall meet on the field and shake hands.

r. TIE GAMES - Games ending in a tie shall remain a tie. There are no shoot-outs or overtimes.

s. FORFEITS – Ten (10) minutes after the scheduled game time is the forfeit time.