



Dallas YMCA Soccer Playing Rules, Policies and Procedures

Grade	Pre-K	Kindergarten	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd and 4 th Grade	5 th and 6 th Grade	7 th /8 th
Game	4v4 or 5v5	4v4 or 5v5	5v5 or 6v6	6v6 or 7v7	8v8 or 9v9	9v9 or 11v11	11v11
Number of Players on Field	4 or 5	4 or 5	5 or 6	6 or 7	8 or 9	9 or 11	11
Minimum players to start*	3*	3*	4*	5*	6*	7*	7*
Game Time	8 min quarters 2 min between quarter 5 min halftime	8 min quarters 2 min between quarter 5 min halftime	10 min quarters 2 min between quarter 5 min halftime	25 min halves 5 min halftime	25 min halves 5 min halftime	30 min halves 5 min halftime	35 min halves 5 min halftime
Player Substitution	Quarters Halftime Injury	Quarters Halftime Injury	Quarters Halftime Injury	Halftime Your throw in Any goal kick After any goal	Halftime Your throw in Any goal kick After any goal	Halftime Your throw in Any goal kick After any goal	Halftime Your throw in Any goal kick After any goal
Field Size (in yards)	15x20	25X30	30 X 50	30 X 50	50 X 80	50 X 80	65 yds x 115
Goal Size	3x5	3x5	4x8	6.5" x 18.5'	6.5" x 18.5'	6.5" x 18.5'	8' x 24'
Goalie	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Offside Rule?	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Out of bounds restart	Kick in	Kick in	Throw in	Throw in	Throw in	Throw in	Throw in
Penalty Kicks	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Direct/Indirect kicks	Indirect only	Indirect only	Indirect only	Both	Both	Both	Both
Slide Tackles	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Referees	Center Referee	Center Referee	Center Referee	Center Referee	Center Referee and 1 Linesmen	Center Referee and 1 Linesmen	Center Referee and 1 Linesmen
Ball Size	3	3	3	4	4	4	5
Max. Roster Size	8 or 10	8 or 10	10 or 12	12 or 14	16	18	18

*Loan a player rule: One team may loan a player to another team to satisfy the minimum number of players required to field a team or to help even the strength of the two teams. All players on the field of play must be on one of the rosters of the two teams scheduled to play in that match. In 2nd grade and up, any goals scored by a loaned player will count toward the team they have been loaned to and scores will be official.

- Field and goal size are guidelines which can vary based on branch field and goal availability.
- Roster size can vary based on available field size and overall roster numbers within each division per branch.

General Information:

- Each child will need an age-appropriate soccer ball and shin guards. Soccer cleats are optional, no baseball/football shoes with cleats on the front tip. Metal cleats are not allowed. Ball sizes are noted in the above grid.
- For your child's safety, players cannot wear jewelry during games except for medical or religious purposes-in this case it must be taped to the body. Earrings, necklaces, and bracelets must be removed. Band-Aids/tape must be placed over newly pierced ears during games.
- Hard casts and finger splints must be covered with suitable padding. If at any point during the game the referee determines an item to be dangerous, the player may be asked to sit out the remainder of the game.
- Score is not kept for Pre-K and Kinder as these are developmental leagues. There are no winners and losers. ALL kids are winners.
- Games scores are kept for 1st – 6th but will record as a 1-0 or 0-0. Only 1 goal scored per team will be recorded regardless of how many are scored. Shut-outs, ties or forfeits will record appropriately.
- Scores will be kept for 7th-8th grade teams. Tie Breakers (if necessary):
 - Head-to-Head
 - Goal Differential (maximum of 3 goals)
 - Fewest goals allowed during the season
 - Highest number of shutouts during the season
 - Fewest cards received (red, yellow cards)
 - Playoff game.
- Inclement Weather: rainout information will be posted/sent-out on Playerspace as soon as information is available. If a game has been played at least 50% that game is considered final. If an entire game is canceled, we try to reschedule the game one time for a future weekend or weeknight.

Game Day Rules:

- (A) Players should show up ready to play: Uniform on. Shin guards on. Shoes on. Bring water.
- (B) All coaches must wear an official YMCA coach shirt, provided by the YMCA.
- (C) Be ready for inspection. The ref will ask the team to line up so he can inspect equipment. Jerseys with player number must be tucked in, socks must be over shin guards, cleats must be on, laces tied, and all jewelry must be removed.

- (D) ALL PLAYERS AND COACHES WILL RECITE THE YMCA PLEDGE.
- (E) Home team provides the game ball.
- (F) Captains of each team meet with the refs in the center circle right before the game for the coin toss which determines who kicks off. The team that loses the toss chooses the goal they will defend and will kick off the second half.
- (G) Spectators must sit on opposite side of the field as teams (players and coaches) and remain 5 feet away from the sideline so the linesman can have access to the entire sideline and are able to do their job without obstruction.
- (H) Players, coaches, and spectators cannot enter the field during play for any reason without permission or invitation from the referee. In the case of an injured player, all players must take a knee and coaches remain on the sideline until the referee stops play. The referee will call the injured players coach to the field, if necessary. This is not a time to coach players. Entering without permission is an offence - see rules.
- (I) Home team is required to change jerseys or wear pinnies in case of color conflict. If needed, field directors or YMCA staff will have extra pinnies available on loan.
- (J) For safety purposes, no one is permitted to stand behind the goal.
- (K) Coaches are allowed to assist players on the field in Pre-K and Kindergarten games.
- (L) EVERY PLAYER MUST PLAY A MINIMUM OF 50% OF EACH GAME. Equal playing time for all is our goal.
- (M) ONLY rostered and registered players are allowed on the playing field. If an illegal player is found on the field, the game is forfeited, and the coach suspended for 1 game.
- (N) **-DO NOT RUN UP THE SCORE** – if you find that your team is winning too easily (by more than 5 points), make adjustments to your line-up through substitutions, moving players to different positions, only allowing certain players to shoot, requiring a certain # of consecutive passes before a shot is allowed, allowing opposing team to add an extra player, etc. No one benefits from or enjoys a game where scoring is out of control.
- (O) The referee is in charge of the game and will have the authority to remove, at their discretion, participants or spectators who exhibit poor sportsmanship. Abuse, verbal or physical, of an official will not be tolerated and may lead to ejection from a game and/or permanent ejection for the season. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of parents/fans of their team.
- (P) Unless it is an urgent matter of player safety, everyone must abide by the Conflict Resolution policy as defined below.
- (Q) Players and coaches line up after the end of the game and shake hands with the opposing team and the officials.
- (R) SNACK TIME!

Rules of the game:

Start of Play:

Each game, quarter or half begins with a kick-off. There is also a kick-off after a goal by the team not scoring. The team that is not kicking-off must remain outside the center circle. The kicker must clearly move the ball in any direction, and then not touch the ball again until someone else has touched it. A goal can be scored direct from a kick-off.

Throw-Ins: K-8th only

When one team kicks the ball over a sideline and out of bounds, the other team gets a throw-in. The throw-in takes place where the ball went out of bounds. The player must stand behind the line and keep both feet on the ground until the ball leaves the players hands. Both hands must be on the ball and the ball must be thrown from behind the head. An incorrect throw-in results in a loss of possession*. The thrower cannot play the ball until another player on either team touches the ball. If done incorrectly the opponent will be awarded an indirect free kick. A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in. Any delay of game on a throw in as determined by the official will be a yellow card.

*1st-3rd grade are allowed a do over if a player raises their foot, throws from the side or in front of their head, or touches the ball before a second player has played the ball.

*Kick-Ins only for Pre-K/ Kindergarten optional. All kick-ins shall be indirect kicks. Do overs are allowed if done incorrectly.

Direct and Indirect Free Kicks and Penalty Kicks

After any foul the team that was fouled is awarded a direct free kick from the spot where the foul was committed. You can score off a direct kick by kicking the ball directly into the goal; you cannot score off an indirect kick. An indirect kick must touch another player – on either team – before it can go into the net, or it does not count as a goal and the defensive team gets a goal kick. That is why a team with an indirect kick near the opposing team's goal may have one player tap the ball so a second player can shoot – once the second player has touched the ball, it will be a goal if it goes directly into the other team's goal.

Physical fouls and handballs result in a direct kick. Corner kicks are direct kicks. Offside and obstruction fouls result in an indirect kick. After a player takes a free kick, including kick-offs, goal kicks, and corner kicks, he cannot touch the ball again until another player touches the ball.

-Direct Free Kick

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following seven offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent

A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following three offences:

- holds an opponent
- spits at an opponent
- handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)

A direct free kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred, and players of the defending team must remain 10 yards from the penalty mark until the ball is kicked. A goal can be scored from a direct free kick. Anyone on the team may take the kick.

-Penalty Kick: 2nd-8th only

A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above ten offences is committed by a player inside his own penalty area (goal box), irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play. Position: the ball is kicked from the penalty spot and all players except the kicker (who does not have to be the fouled player) and the goalkeeper must remain outside the penalty area and at least 10 yards from the penalty spot (outside the penalty kick arc). The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, without touching either goalposts, crossbar, or goal net, until the ball has been kicked; goalkeeper must not be moving. When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one-foot touching, or in line with, the goal line. If the ball hits the goalie and stays in the field, it is a live ball and any player can then play it. If the ball hits the post or crossbar, any player – except the one who kicked it – can play it.

-Indirect Free Kick

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following four offences:

- Controls the ball with his hands for more than six seconds before releasing it from his possession
- Touches the ball again with his hands after he has released it from his possession and before it has touched another player
- Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate
- Touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:

- Dangerous Play: a player does something to endanger himself or others. Most common are high kicks or low headers.
- Impeding the progress of an opponent when not within playing distance of the ball (Obstruction)
- Obstructing the Goalkeeper.

The following apply to the goalkeeper in his or her penalty area:

- Handling a throw-in or kick from a teammate (hands)
- Dropping the ball and picking it up again.

The indirect free kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred. A goal can be scored from an indirect kick only if another player from either team touches the ball.

When there is a wall of three or more players attackers are not allowed within one meter of it. Any attacking player found to be less than one meter from the wall will be penalized and the other team will receive an indirect free kick.

Cautionable Offences (Yellow Card)

- Unsporting behavior
- Dissent by word or action
- Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
- Delaying the restart of play
- Failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in.
- Entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permissions
- Deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permissions

Sending Off Offenses (Red Card)

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct
- Spitting at an opponent or any other person
- Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
- Denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
- Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
- Receiving a second caution in the same match.

Any player, coach or spectator who has been red carded must leave the game. The game will not be continued until the offender has left the vicinity. Any player receiving a red card cannot play in the next match.

Corner Kicks & Goal Kicks

If the ball goes over one of the endlines, it is either a goal kick or a corner kick depending on which team kicked it out of bounds. If the defensive team kicks it out, it's a corner kick. If the offensive team kicks it out, it's a goal kick.

-Goal Kick:

The ball is placed on or inside the goal box (the smaller box in front of the goal) The ball will be in play as soon as it is touched, and it can be played inside the 18-yard box. Opposition players are not allowed to be inside the box until the ball is in play.

-Corner Kick:

The ball is kicked within the small, one-yard arc in the corner of the field by the corner flag nearest where the ball crossed the goal line. The opposing players must stay the minimum required distance from the ball on the corner kick spot. After kicking, the player cannot play the ball before another player from either team has touched it, otherwise the opponents will be awarded an indirect free kick. This also holds true if the ball bounces off a goal post or referee. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick

*Pre-K through 1st is allowed a do over if the kicker plays the ball before another player.

Offside rule: 3rd-8th only

- Offside refers to an attacking player being in an offside position and is **actively** involved in play when the ball is played ahead.
- A player is in an offside position when there are less than 2 players between that player and the goal (one is usually the opposing goalkeeper) when the ball is passed ahead to that player.
- Offside can only occur in the attacking half of the field.
- No player can be offside when even with, or behind the ball.
- No player can be offside when first playing a throw in, goal kick, or corner kick.
- A player not in the play of the game is offside any moment he touches the ball, is interfering with play or is seeking to gain an advantage by being in that position.
- A player shall not be declared offside by the referee if the player is NOT involved in the play, merely offside in location.

If a player is declared offside, the referee awards an indirect free-kick, which is taken by a player of the opposing team from where the infringement occurred, unless the offense is committed by a player in his opponents' goal area, in which case the free-kick shall be taken from any point within the goal area.

HEADING POLICY

Deliberate heading of the ball will not be allowed for **5th grade and below**. When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offence. If the deliberate header occurs within the penalty area, the indirect free kick should be taken from the spot of the infraction; unless the infraction was within 10 yards of goal, in which case the indirect kick should be taken from the penalty spot. The team that committed the infraction may still setup a wall 10-yds away. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

All coaches should be instructed to teach and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for heading the ball.

Keepers

-Goalies can touch the ball with their hands as long as they are within the penalty area, which is the big box that surrounds the goal. Once the goalie leaves the penalty area, he must play the ball like any other player, which means he cannot touch the ball with his hands or arms. The smaller box in front of the goal is the goal box; its only purpose serves as a place to put the ball for goal kicks.

-Goalkeepers cannot pick-up a pass from a teammate. If a player passes to his goalkeeper, the goalie must play the ball with his feet or the other team will get an indirect kick from the spot where the pass was picked up. Goalies cannot be substituted in an indirect or direct (PK) kick.

-Pre-K and Kinder teams do not use the goalie position; All players on the field are field players. A player is not to consistently remain inside of their own goal box. The purpose of this rule is to encourage all players to play the complete field and not to be designated as a defender that in effect acts as a goalie. The purpose of this rule in small sided games is to encourage coaches to give every player the opportunity to see and play the game from every aspect and position on the field.

Advantage Rule

The referee, in his discretion, may decide to not stop play due to a foul if it would be an "advantage" to the fouled team to not stop play. The concept is that the team that was fouled should not be punished by having an attack stopped which might result in a goal and, conversely, that the team which committed the foul should not gain an advantage as a result of the foul.

Substitution

Players who are being taken off and replaced must leave the pitch by the nearest point on the touchline and must have the permission of the center referee before entering the field. This includes changing the goalkeeper.

Substitutes are as important to the game as the players playing the game are. Everyone needs time to rest, watch the game, talk to the coach, learn from the coach, and cheer on the team. Support from the sideline can bring the players on the field to a higher level. When players are substituted, it is not because they made a mistake, it's because the coach felt they needed a rest, or he wanted to teach them something. Never pull a player out of a game because of a mistake. (2nd-4th grade) Player can be pulled after a yellow card but only the player that got a yellow card.

Kinder Substitution Exception

If a team has less than 6 (preK) or less than 8 (K) players, the coach has the **option** to use the substitution *exception rule**. When utilizing the *exception** the coach must inform the referee prior to the start of the game, and the referee will then communicate that to the opposing team.

1st and 3rd Quarters: starters play the entire quarter. No substitutions except for injury.

2nd and 4th Quarters: all non-starters (those who did not play in the 1st or 3rd quarter) play the entire quarter, no substitutions except for injury. Optional substitutions in the 2nd and 4th quarter at the 3 minute (prek) or 4 minute (kinder) mark for **only** those players who played in the previous quarter. **Every player must play at least one complete quarter in both halves.**

Handball

A deliberate handball is an offense. There will be no goal in cases where the ball is accidentally strikes a player's hand before crossing over the line. Similarly, if a player has accidentally handled the ball and created an advantage or scores, they will be penalized with a free kick.

The following "Handball" situations, even if accidental, will be a free kick:

- The ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand/arm.
- A player gains control/possession of the ball after it has contacted the hand/arm and then scores or creates a goal scoring opportunity.
- The ball contacts a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger or the ball touches the player arm/hand when it is above the shoulder.

The following will not usually be a free kick, unless they are one of the above situations:

- The ball touches a player's hand/arm which is close to their body and has not made their body unnaturally bigger.
- If a player is falling and the ball touches their hand/arm when it is between their body and the ground support the body.
- If the goalkeeper attempts to clear the ball, a throw-in or deliberate kick from a team-mate but the clearance fails, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball.

Youth players may protect their head, chest, or groin areas with hands/arms in a **defensive posture**.

Drop ball

If the play is stopped inside the penalty area the ball will simply be dropped for the goalkeeper. If it is stopped outside the penalty area the ball will be dropped for a player from the team that last touched the ball. In all cases, players will have to be four meters away.

Referees:

-PLEASE RESPECT THE REFEREES - Referee's have the ultimate authority during a game. **Please discuss any concerns AFTER the game AWAY from the field in a respectful manner.** If you feel attention needs to be called to your field during a game, send someone to find a field director or YMCA staff. If a coach or spectator is offensive in any way to a referee they will be ejected and suspended for a time to be determined by Sports Director. *Abuse of a referee will not be tolerated!* **The ref has been trained to be in position to observe the play both on and off the ball. The ref is often in the optimal position to see what is going on and frequently sees things that spectators or even players do not see. Give the referee the benefit of the doubt.** Yelling at a referee will not change the call. Screaming or going after a referee in front of the players shows disrespect for authority.

Coaches are not allowed to conference/discuss game calls with the referees after the game. Rule interpretations and game feedback should be brought to the field director or YMCA staff.

1. **1st offense- coach will not be allowed to coach the 1st half of the following game**
2. **2nd offense - 1 game suspension**

Zero Tolerance Policy:

The YMCA requires coaches, parents and spectators to abide by our **Zero Tolerance Policy**. Actions that will not be tolerated before, during or after practices or games are: verbal/physical abuse of referees, players, coaches or spectators; charging onto the field; arguing with referees, coaches or spectators; profanity or derogatory names or comments; any comments (other than encouraging or complimentary) or taunting directed at opposing players, coaches or fans. If a coach, parent or spectator does not abide by this policy a referee may give a warning, eject the offending person or penalize the team. If at any point the referee feels threatened, he/she may "abandon the game." If this occurs, the offender's team will suffer a loss by forfeit of the game.

YMCA Behavior Policy:

The YMCA reserves the right to warn, suspend, expel, terminate any member, guest, or program participant in the following situations:

- Failure to follow YMCA behavior standards or from violation of any other posted, published or communicated rules or policies at a YMCA branch or program/event.
- If a person has been convicted of any crime involving sexual abuse, is or has been a registered sex offender, has been convicted of any offense relating to the use, sale, possession, or transportation of narcotics or habit forming and/or dangerous drugs, or is presently or habitually under the influence of dangerous drugs or chemicals, narcotics, or intoxicating beverages.

- If a person requires an inordinate amount of attention from the staff thereby causing inadequate levels of supervision for the remainder of the participants or members.
- If a person's behavior is determined to be inappropriate within the scope and spirit of the YMCA values.
- For any reason within the discretion of YMCA management.

Conflict Resolution Policy:

We strongly recommend that everyone abide by the 48 hour rule:

Unless it is an urgent matter of safety; parents, guardians and/or coaches who are upset regarding a situation or circumstance during a game or practice must wait 48 hours after the incident occurred before approaching the head coach, field director or sports director. Give time for emotions to subside, then define the issues thoughtfully and suggest solutions. All discussions and interactions that occur after the 48 hour period must be conducted in a mature, polite, civil, and non-intimidating manner. This includes all forms of communication (face-to-face discussions, emails, etc). If a resolution is not satisfactory, then the incident will be turned over to the sports committee for further review.

However, if you feel immediate attention needs to be called to your field during a game, find a field director or YMCA staff and proceed in a calm and respectful manner.

Team Formation:

- Team Formation: Teams are formed based on grade, closest school, player and coach request. All requests are honored when possible. Placement is based on availability. We cannot guarantee placement on a team by location or school, but we try our best.
- Existing teams new to the YMCA can join without releases.
- Returning teams: Players are guaranteed spots on their previous team only if registered on time. Roster spots will be filled after the registration deadline.
- Returning players can play on the same team or request a new team.
- Players can "play-up" a league. Players can never play down.
- Players can join YMCA soccer from any city within the Dallas area.
- If in all leagues, a team wants more competitive play up that team can request to play up.
- Player placement, league divisions and team placement are up to the discretion of the Sports Director.