

Southwestern Youth Association (SYA) and NCSL REC Soccer Standards of Play for Fall 2026

	SYA RECREATIONAL SOCCER PROGRAM					NATIONAL CAPITAL SOCCER LEAGUE (NCSL REC)		
Age Group Birth Dates 	U6 Aug 1, 2020 & later	U7-U8 Aug 1, 2018 - July 31, 2020	U9 Aug 1, 2017 - July 31, 2018	U10 Aug 1, 2016 - July 31, 2017	U11-U12 Aug 1, 2014 - July 31, 2016	U13-U14 Aug 1, 2012 - July 31, 2014	U15-U16 Aug 1, 2010 - July 31, 2012	U17-U19 Aug 1, 2007 - July 31, 2010
Field Size (yards)	Length: 18-22 Width: 10-22	Length: 40-45 Width: 28-32	Length: 55-65 Width: 35-45	Length: 55-65 Width: 35-45	Length: 70-80 Width: 45-55	Length: 100-130 Width: 50-100	Length: 100-130 Width: 50-100	Length: 100-130 Width: 50-100
Goal Size (maximum)	4 x 6 feet	4 x 6 feet	6½ x 18½ feet	6½ x 18½ feet	7 x 21 feet	7 x 21 feet	7 x 21 feet	7 x 21 feet
Ball Size	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5
Number of Players	Any number up to 4 v 4 (see Note 1)	5 v 5	6 v 6	8 v 8	9 v 9	11 v 11	11 v 11	11 v 11
Game Time (# periods x duration)	4 x 8 minutes = 32 min	2 x 20 minutes = 40 min	2 x 25 minutes = 50 min	2 x 25 minutes = 50 min	2 x 30 minutes = 60 min	2 x 35 minutes = 70 min	2 x 40 minutes = 80 min	2 x 40 minutes = 80 min
Halftime	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
Grace Period (to field min. # players)	Play with # players present at game time	Play with # players present at game time	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	No grace period	No grace period	No grace period
Player Participation	At least 50% of game	At least 50% of game	At least 50% of game GK 50% or less	At least 50% of game GK 50% or less	At least 50% of game GK 50% or less	At least 50% of game	At least 50% of game	At least 50% of game
Substitutions	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play	Unlimited at any stoppage in play
Goalkeepers	No goalkeepers	No goalkeepers	Yes No punts or drop kicks	Yes No punts or drop kicks	Yes No restrictions	Yes No restrictions	Yes No restrictions	Yes No restrictions
Offside	No offside	No offside	Between halfway line and goal line (see Note 2)	Between build out line and goal line (see Note 2)	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game
Heading the Ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sliding/Slide Tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Score/Goal Differential (see Note 3)	NA - score is not kept	NA - score is not kept	4 (trailing team add 1 player)	4 (trailing team add 1 player)	4 (trailing team add 1 player)	Leading team remove 1 player for each goal > 4	Leading team remove 1 player for each goal > 4	Leading team remove 1 player for each goal > 4
Free Kicks (PK = Penalty Kick)	Indirect only No PKs	Indirect only No PKs	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game
Opponents' Distance on Free Kicks	10 feet	10 feet	8 yards	8 yards	8 yards	10 yards	10 yards	10 yards
Opponents' Distance on Goal Kicks	Behind halfway line	Behind halfway line	Behind halfway line	Behind build out line	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game
Match Officials (see Note 4)	None - use Game Facilitator	None - use Game Facilitator	Up to 3	Up to 3	Up to 3	Up to 3	Up to 3	Up to 3
Misconduct (Yellow/Red Cards) (see Note 5)	No	No	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game	As defined by the Laws of the Game

1. U6 can play any format up to 4 v 4 (1 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4).

2. U9 build out line is halfway line. U10 build out lines are equidistant from top of each penalty area and halfway line; no offside between build out lines (halfway line to each build out line).

3. U9-U12: trailing team may add 1 player if goal differential is 4 or more goals. U14-U19: leading team must remove 1 player for each goal above 4-goal differential. Mercy Rule can be invoked by any U14-U19 team trailing by 4 or more goals.

4. U6-U8: Game Facilitator (coach, volunteer) acts as referee. U9-U19: SYA assigns US Soccer-certified match officials depending on number of referees available. Club linesmen may be used for any game when requested by the referee.

5. U6-U8: No yellow/red cards. U9-U19: Referees can show yellow/red cards to players, coaches, and team officials. Referees cannot show cards to spectators but can dismiss spectators from the field. SYA sanctions referee abuse IAW US Soccer policy.

***** ALL GOALS MUST BE CHECKED BEFORE EVERY GAME *****

Thunder/Lightning: STOP GAME IMMEDIATELY and seek shelter. Do not resume game until 30 minutes after last incidence of thunder/lightning.