

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

	SYA RECREATIONAL SOCCER PROGRAM					NATIONAL CAPITAL SOCCER LEAGUE (NCSL REC)		
Age Group Birth Years →	U6 2019	U7-U8 2017-2018	U9 2016	U10 2015	U11-U12 2013-2014	U14 2011-2012	U16 2009-2010	U19 2006-2008
<b>Field Size (yards)</b>	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
<b>Goal Size (maximum)</b>	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
<b>Ball Size</b>	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5
<b>Number of Players</b>	Any number up to 4 v 4 (see Note 1)	5 v 5	6 v 6	Boys: 8 v 8 Girls: 7 v 7	9 v 9 (see Note 1)	11 v 11	11 v 11	11 v 11
<b>Game Time (# periods x duration)</b>	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
<b>Halftime</b>	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
<b>Grace Period (to field min. # players)</b>	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
<b>Player Participation</b>	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
<b>Substitutions</b>	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
<b>Goalkeepers</b>	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
<b>Offside</b>	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
<b>Heading the Ball</b>	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	No heading the ball	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Sliding/Slide Tackling</b>	No sliding/slide tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	No sliding/slide tackling	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Score/Goal Differential (see Note 3)</b>	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
<b>Free Kicks (PK = Penalty Kick)</b>	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
<b>Opponents' Distance on Free Kicks</b>	10 feet	10 feet	8 yards	8 yards	8 yards	10 yards	10 yards	10 yards
<b>Opponents' Distance on Goal Kicks</b>	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
<b>Match Officials (see Note 4)</b>	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
<b>Misconduct (Yellow/Red Cards) (see Note 5)</b>	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). U11-U12 standard is 9 v 9; however, if either team has 9 players or less (no substitutes) then playing format is 8 v 8.
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.**