

SYA U9 RECREATIONAL SOCCER RULE MODIFICATIONS TO THE IFAB 2026/27 LAWS OF THE GAME

SEPTEMBER 1, 2026

Law 1	The Field of Play	- Field Dimensions: 46-54 yards long by 32-38 yards wide - Center Circle: 8-yard radius - Goal Area: 4 x 14 yards - Penalty Area: 10 x 26 yards - Penalty Mark: 9 yards from goal line - Penalty Arc: 8-yard radius from penalty mark (same as free kick distance) - Corner Arc: 1-yard radius - Corner flags are not mandatory; substitute items must be safe if used - Goals: 6½ x 18½ feet (maximum) - Halfway Line is also the Build Out Line
Law 2	The Ball	Size 4
Law 3	The Players	6 v 6 – 5 field players plus goalkeeper - Minimum of 4 players to start/continue game - No team captains are required on the field of play nor any player wear a qualifying armband
	Grace Period	5 minutes after scheduled kickoff time to field a minimum of 4 players
	Substitutions	Unlimited at any stoppage in play (with referee's permission)
	Goal Differential	4 goals – trailing team add maximum of 1 player; leading team has <u>option</u> of removing 1 player
	Participation Rule	- Every player must play at least 50% of game - Goalkeepers can play no more than 50% of game (as a goalkeeper)
Law 4	The Players' Equipment	Uniform numbers are not required
Law 5	The Referee	- Head coach is responsible for behavior of all players, team officials, and spectators - Referees can show yellow/red cards to coaches/team officials but not to spectators
Law 6	The Other Match Officials	- No Assistant Referees (or other match officials). If used, other match officials have all responsibilities and authorities under the Laws of the Game - If requested by the referee, home and away team coaches may provide "club linesman" to assist referee with ball in/out of play decisions - Club linesman may indicate possession/direction of restart at the referee's discretion
Law 7	The Duration of the Match	2 x 25-minute halves (no added time) (total game time = 50 minutes) 5-minute halftime - Referees can incorporate up to 3-minute water/hydration/cooling break in any half
Law 8	The Start and Restart of Play	Opponents must be at least 8 yards from ball on kickoff
Law 9	The Ball In and Out of Play	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 10	Determining the Outcome of a Match	- All eligible players may participate in a penalty shoot-out (players sent off (red card) are not eligible) - Coaches and non-kicking players may remain with their teams on the field during a penalty shoot-out (at the referee's discretion)
Law 11	Offside	Halfway line is the build out line. Offside judged between halfway line (build out line) and goal line
Law 12	Fouls and Misconduct	- All female players may use their hands or arms for chest protection - Any player may use their hands or arms to protect their head, face, or neck from impact with the ball (at the referee's discretion)
	No Heading Rule	Players cannot play the ball with their head - If play is intentional, restart is an indirect free kick to opponent - If play is unintentional or accidental, restart is a dropped ball to team that played ball before head contact (drop to goalkeeper if heading occurs inside penalty area)
	No Sliding Rule	- Field players cannot slide on the ground (intentionally leave their feet) for any reason <u>Exception</u>: Goalkeepers can make sliding saves in their own penalty area if there is no danger to any player (including the goalkeeper)
	Build Out Rule	- Goalkeepers cannot punt or drop kick ball; ball must be kicked, thrown, or rolled into play - Opponents must move behind halfway line when other team's goalkeeper has possession of the ball
Law 13	The Free Kick	Opponents must be at least 8 yards away (unless standing on own goal line between goal posts)
Law 14	The Penalty Kick	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 15	The Throw-In	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 16	The Goal Kick	Opponents must be behind halfway line (build out line) for kicking team's goal kick
Law 17	The Corner Kick	Opponents must be at least 8 yards from the corner arc (same as free kick distance)