McAlester Boys & Girls Club

Soccer Rules

Scroll for your age group

4U / 6U

Objectives and Introduction

The objective of the 4U & 6U soccer program is to provide our children with a simple, fast-paced game with few interruptions that allows maximum participation by everyone. This is a developmental league, NOT COMPETITIVE, with the focus on active participation, skills, development, and most of all fun.

The following rules and guidelines are a summary that works in most situations. These rules are based on the laws of soccer, modified to the 4U & 6U age groups.

1. Field Size: 35 yards by 25 yards. The field is marked with a halfway line, and a line designated as the “goal kick line”. The goal kick line designates the area from which a goal kick should be taken, and provides a reference point on the field for the players.
2. Play format: 3 vs 3 with no goal keeper. Usage of hands in soccer is forbidden.
3. Duration: 4 – 6 minute quarters, with a 5 minute half time. The quarter break should be taken at a natural stoppage in play (i.e., throw in) or when the ball is in a neutral position on the field. Half time duration is 5 minutes, quarter break duration should be about 2 minutes. If a quarter break is taken with the ball in a neutral position, the play is restarted with a drop ball at that point.
4. Scoring: No scores will be kept or recorded, nor will team standings be kept. Coaches should exhibit good sportsmanship and back off their goal scoring opportunities when a differential of more than 7 goals is amassed.
5. Referees: Referees are not provided for 4U / 6U games. Parent coaches should be familiar with these rules. Coaches can be the referees as along as it is agreed upon by both teams in advance.
6. Coaches responsibilities, before the game begins:

* Player’s equipment: all players are required to have uniforms (shirts, provided by BGC) and shin guards, socks must be worn on the outside of the shin guard and cover it entirely.
* Shoes: No metal cleats or toe cleats, tennis shoes are fine, no sandals. We do not require cleats, you may purchase them for your child if desired.
* Safety: No player may wear equipment dangerous to himself or others. This includes casts, metal braces, and jewelry. Earrings are specifically prohibited, including posts for pierced ears.
* The home team provides the game ball (size 3). The referee should ensure the ball is properly inflated and free from defects before the match begins.
* One parent /coach / referee should have a whistle, and a watch or stopwatch to keep time. It is the parent / coach/ referee’s responsibility to stop the game for fouls, quarter, and half-time breaks.

1. Coaches: Players will have the attitude exhibited by their coach. Although the coach is responsible for teaching skills and strategy, the primary focus on the game should be recreational and for fun.

* 1 coach per team may remain on the field during play in order to provide encouragement and advice to players, as long as the coach does not interfere with the flow of the game. There should never be more than 1 coach per team on the field of play. Emphasis must be placed on increasing the number of “ball touches” for each player. Players should not be taught to stand in front of the goal as a goal keeper. Coaches who do so will limit this player’s development by decreasing the amount of time this player has to develop valuable ball handling skills. DO NOT TEACH PLAYING POSITIONS AT THIS AGE!
* No coach or parent may stand behind or beside the goal. Spectators should remain on the sidelines.
* It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that all comments from the sidelines are positive.

1. Kick-off: starts the game, the second half, and after each goal. At the start of the second half, Teams trade ends of the field.

* The kick-off must travel forwards (not backwards). The player taking the kick-off may not touch the ball a second time until someone else touches the ball first (i.e. a player cannot dribble from the kick-off). In either instance, the restart is to replay the kick-off.
* Goals may be scored directly from a kick-off.
* The visiting team kicks off the first half, the home team the second half. The home team has the choice of which direction to attack in the first half.

1. Substitutions: ALL PLAYERS MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH MATCH.

* Substitutions may occur at a kick-in (team taking the kick-in), at a quarter or half time breaks, and after a goal.
* A coach may substitute a player who is injured, or who has lost contact with the game, with the permission of the parent-referee. No substitution may occur unless the ball is out of play.

1. Ball out of play: the ball is out of play when the ball has completely crossed the touchline (sideline).

* The kick-in is taken by the opposite team that touched the ball last as near as possible to where the ball left the field.
* The kicker must have part of each foot either on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline.
* A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-in.
* Player taking kick-in may not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
* Anytime the parent-referee blows the whistle to stop play in the case of an injury or other stoppage where the ball has not gone out of play, the game is restarted with a drop ball at a neutral position on the field.

1. Goal kick: Attacking team has touched the ball last, and the ball has completely crossed the end line without scoring a goal.

* Defending team places ball at goal-kick line marked on field, in the area in front of their goal.
* Ball is kicked forwards. The ball may not be touched by any player until it has traveled at least 5 yards.
* If a ball does not travel 5 yards, or is touched first, the kick is retaken. The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.
* A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick.

1. Corner kick: Defending team has touched the ball last, and the ball has completely crossed the end line without scoring a goal.

FOULS: All fouls result in a DIRECT FREE KICK being taken by the opposing team. There are no penalty kicks.

1. For the purposes of the 6U program, fouls should only be whistled when necessary to maintain order in the game, or to prevent a more dangerous situation from occurring. Physical contact is a normal part of soccer. While bumping and grinding while moving the ball should necessarily be condoned, it should not be penalized as long as the physical capabilities of the players are similar and no clear advantage is gained by doing so. When a parent-referee notices a foul, or realizes one is about to occur, the opportunity should be taken to explain the violation and how to avoid it.
2. In general, the following are judged as fouls: kicking, tripping, pushing, holding and hitting an opponent. In addition, making contact with an opponent before the ball when tackling to gain possession is a foul. In soccer, a tackle is the action of taking the ball away from an opponent. A tackle from behind is always judged a foul at this level.
3. Slide tackling (sliding on the ground in order to play the ball, offensively or defensively) is prohibited at this level.
4. Deliberate handballs: the hand is considered to be part of the arm or hand, from the shoulder down. A deliberate handball is judge as movement of the “hand-to –ball”, where an advantage is gained by doing so.

A kicked ball that deflects off of a player’s arm, with no intent to play the ball is not a handball.

A plyer protecting their face or other body parts from a hard kicked ball should not be called for a handball unless an obvious advantage is gained.

UNSPORTING BEHAVIOR: SCREAMING, YELLING, OR OTHER UNSAVORY CONDUCT BY COACHES AND PARENTS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Should these incidences occur, the parent-referee should make a written report to the Athletic Coordinator. In severe cases this will result in removal and or suspension of the offending adult.

Field positioning of players: No player is allowed to play as a goal keeper on defense, or to “park” or “camp” in front of the opposing team’s goal on offense. All players should be involved in active play at all times, meaning each player should be actively following the movement of the ball, even if jockeying for tactical position on offense or defense. If the parent-referee notices a child not involved in active play, he should encourage the player to join play. If the player is unwilling or unable (due to exhaustion) the referee should allow this player to be substituted at the next stoppage or when the ball is in neutral position.

8U

1. Field markings: Same as full sized soccer field (scaled down), including a “penalty area”. However, the only significance of the “penalty area” is to designate an area that defensive players cannot be in when a goal kick is taken. There are NO penalty kicks.
2. Teams: 6 vs 6 Substitutions at quarters and half time. Equal playing time for all players. Each player must play at least 3 quarters before any player can play the whole game. Ball size 3.
3. Equipment: soccer cleats (no metal) or tennis shoes. Shin guards are mandatory at all practices and games. No jewelry including earrings, watches and etc.
4. Duration of game: 2 - 15-minute halves with a 5-minute half.
5. Rules: same as regular soccer (with distances scaled down appropriately), except that there are no indirect free kicks, no offside, and no penalty kicks. GOAL KEEPERS MAY BE USED.
6. Games start with a kick off in the center of the field, with the defending team outside the center circle. A coin toss determines which team starts the game, with the winner of the toss selecting which side of the field to defend and the loser kicking off in the first half and the other team kicking off to start the second half.
7. Defending players must be outside the penalty area when the attacking team takes a goal kick, and must stay outside the penalty area until the ball completely crosses the line designating the penalty area. The ball must go out of the penalty area before it is in play. If it does not go out of the penalty area the goal kick is retaken, with no penalty to the kicking team.
8. Opponents must be at least 5 yards away when a free kick is taken.
9. Ball is out of play only when the entire ball has passed completely beyond the boundary line. A ball that has any portion on the line is in play and the game continues. This applies to sidelines, end lines and goals.
10. Coaches should remain within 10 yards of the midfield line. Parents and coaches should not coach or instruct the players during play of the game, but coaches may do so at the quarter and half breaks. Reasonable words of encouragement are welcome at all times.

10U

1. Ball: size 4, field 50 x 40 yards.
2. Maximum of 14 players on each team, each player must play at least 50% of each half for which they are present.
3. Substitutions: a coach may substitute players at the half, on your team’s kick-in, after a goal has been scored by either team, on either team’s goal kick, or if play is stopped for an injury. You are allowed to borrow other players from the same age-group if you are going to be short.
4. Equipment: shin guards are required and must be worn inside the sock. Soft-cleated soccer shoes or tennis shoes are allowed. No jewelry is allowed.
5. Referees: Game referees will be provided. Only the referees and players not coaches are allowed on the field during play.
6. Duration of the game: The game is divided into 2 halves of 15 minutes. The half-time break will last 5 minutes.
7. Kick-offs: Opponents should be outside the center circle when the kick-off commences. The ball must travel forward before another player touches it. The initial kicker may not kick the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player from either team.
8. Ball in and out of play: the ball is in play until it entirely crosses the touchline or goal line or until the referee stops the play.
9. Scoring: The entire ball must cross the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar for a goal to be scored. Scores will be recorded.
10. Fouls and Misconduct: Fouls may result in direct, indirect, or penalty kicks. The referee will instruct the players as to type of kick awarded at the time of the foul.
11. Goalkeeper Safety: No player shall attempt to kick the ball when the goalie has possession. Even if the goalie has only one hand on the ball and it is still on the ground, the goalie is considered to be “in possession” and the ball should not be kicked.