



East Lincoln Optimist Club League

U10 & U12 Playing Rules

Zero Tolerance Policy

There is zero tolerance for profanity, fighting, or abuse of officials from players, coaches, or fans.

- Profanity or fighting on the field will result in an immediate red card with no substitution allowed.
- Coaches: Please make your players aware of this rule.

Game Seating Expectations

- HOME team parents/spectators should sit to the left of the center line (when viewing from the spectator side).
- AWAY team parents/spectators should sit to the right of the center line.

Playing Age

- U10: 8 & 9-year-olds
- U12: 10 & 11-year-olds
- Exemptions may be approved by the ELOC Soccer Commissioner.

Heading Rule

In accordance with NCYSA guidelines:

- Heading is banned at U12 and below.
- An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the header.
- If the header occurs within the attacking team's goal area, the kick will be taken on the goal area line closest to the infraction.

Law 1: The Field of Play

- Dimensions:
 - Length: 50–70 yards
 - Width: 40–50 yards

- Field Markings:
 - Halfway line with a center circle (8-yard radius)
 - HOME side: Left | AWAY side: Right (from spectator view)
- Goal Area:
 - 5 yards out and 5 yards wide from each goalpost
- Penalty Area:
 - 10 yards out and 10 yards wide from each goalpost
 - Penalty mark is 8 yards from goal line
- Goals:
 - Max width: 21 feet | Max height: 7 feet
 - Goals must be anchored securely
- Flag posts and Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA

Law 2: The Ball

- Size 4 ball required

Law 3: Players, Substitutions, Playing Time

- Number of Players:
 - 7 players per side (including 1 goalkeeper)
 - Minimum to start: 6 players (match forfeited if fewer)
- Substitutions:
 - Free substitutions allowed anytime, but player must exit field before substitute enters.
- Playing Time:
 - Each player must play at least 50% of total game time.

Law 4: Player Equipment

- Conform to FIFA
- Shin guards and soccer cleats required
- Baseball or football cleats are not allowed
- Non-uniform clothing may be worn under jerseys due to weather.

Law 5: The Referee

- A registered referee is recommended
- All infractions should be explained briefly to players and, upon request, coaches.

Law 6: Assistant Referees

- One assistant referee will be used and will share on-field responsibilities with the center referee.

Law 7: Match Duration

- Two (2) halves of 25 minutes each

- 5-minute halftime

Law 8: Start & Restart of Play

- Conform to FIFA
- Opponents must be 8 yards from the ball during kickoff

Notes:

- Kickoff can go backward
- Goals may be scored from kickoff

Law 9 – Ball In and Out of Play

- Conform to FIFA

Law 10 – Method of Scoring

- Conform to FIFA

Law 11 – Offside

- Conform to FIFA

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:
 - Goalkeeper Punting Rule: An indirect free kick is awarded at the center circle if a goalie punts or drop-kicks the ball from their penalty area into the opposing penalty area.
 - No Slide Tackling: Slide tackles are not allowed. Sliding without tackling is permitted.

Law 13: Free Kicks

- Conform to FIFA
- Opponents must be 7 yards from the ball

Law 14: Penalty Kicks

- Conform to FIFA
- Penalty mark placed 8 yards from the goal line

Law 15: Throw-Ins

- Conform to FIFA

Law 16: Goal Kicks

- Conform to FIFA

Law 17: Corner Kicks

- Conform to FIFA
- Opponents must remain 7 yards from the ball

Law 18: Weather Policy

- If the first half is completed, the game is final.
- If not, the League Commissioner will attempt to reschedule.

Law 19: Tournament Rules***Seeding***

- Based on total points:
 - Win = 3 pts
 - Tie = 1 pt
 - Loss = 0 pts
- Tiebreakers:
 1. Head-to-head result
 2. Goal differential
 3. Goals scored

Overtime & Shoot-Out Procedure**Overtime**

- 10 minutes total (two 5-minute halves)
- Full time played (not sudden death)
- If still tied, proceed to shoot-out

Shoot-Out Rules

- All players are eligible to shoot
- Teams may change goalkeepers
- Coach selects 5 shooters and provides jersey numbers
- Teams alternate kicks
- Once a player shoots, they must leave the field

Shoot-Out Procedure

- Official places ball on penalty mark
- Keeper must stay on the goal line until the ball is struck
- No stutter steps, dribbling, or hesitation—one fluid strike only
- If the keeper leaves the line early and the shot misses, a re-kick is awarded

Sudden Death

- If tied after 5 shooters:
 - Next 5 shooters selected (must use all players before repeating)
 - Starting with round 6, shoot-out goes to sudden death:
 - If one team scores and the other does not, the game ends.