

KYSA U4 SOCCER RULES

Updated: 04/03/22

Coaches:

- **U4 Coaches serve as referees for U4 games.** Work together with the coach of the other team to share refereeing and time-keeping duties throughout the game. **(In other words, one coach for each team should be on the field so that the two opposing coaches are on the field at the same time refereeing and keeping time during all four quarters.)**
- Work collaboratively as coaches to establish a clinic environment as the game progresses; your teams are playing “against” each other; at the same time, obviously both coaches are there to help the players learn, and that includes working with and instructing players from both sides as needed. In U4 in particular, coaches should ensure that all players have the chance to experience success on the field (dribbling the ball; shooting the ball; scoring).
- Coaches are responsible for the sportsmanship of the team and the parents of the players. The coaches are expected to talk to any players/parents who are not displaying good sportsmanship.
- Your practice and game will be hosted on the same day. Practices will be 20 minutes long followed by a 20-minute scrimmage. **Note: if the children are getting antsy or tired, you can cut the initial practice a bit short to get to the scrimmage.**
- Before the scrimmage begins the coach will:
 - Have the children tap their shin guards with their knuckles
 - They must have shin guards to play
 - Check for soccer cleats
 - No front spike
 - Sneakers are fine
 - Check for jewelry, earrings, chains, etc. Chains & bracelets must be removed; earrings should be removed too but can be taped or covered with bandaids if they cannot be removed. Medical bracelets may remain on as long as they are taped to the wrist.
- Start the game ON TIME
- Tell the kids to get right back up and not try to kick the ball when they are on the ground.
- Be especially mindful to instruct players not to use their hands—not only due to the rules, but for safety, as new players sometimes want to pick the ball up while others are kicking at it.
- Instruct your players to take a knee if a player is injured and is being tended to on the field.
- Use your whistle – children pay attention and will learn from it.
- Your job is to keep the playing environment FUN, SAFE, INSTRUCTIVE, and focused on the child.
- **Any concerns or issues related to U4 should be communicated to the U8 & Down Commissioner & the President.**

SCRIMMAGES ARE TO BE USED AS A TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND NO SCORES OR STANDINGS ARE TO BE KEPT.

Scrimmage Play:

- Ball – size 3.
- Number of players – 4 V 4, no goalie, and **EVERYONE** plays a minimum of 2 quarters. **NOTE: In U4, much leeway is granted here, as it is often difficult to maintain proper sides during scrimmages in this age group given the age and experience level of the players. You may end up playing 3 V 3 or 2 V 2—or even 2 V 1 or 2 (or 1) V 0 at given moments, for instance. The idea is to give the kids as many chances as possible to get touches on the ball and to pass and shoot.**
- Substitutions are permitted between quarters or upon an injury. (Again in U4, much leeway is granted here, as players may come on and off the field during the scrimmage. You need not stop play when this happens as long as there are no safety concerns. Just allow the game to proceed.)
- Shin guards are required for safety reasons and need to be covered by a pair of socks.
- Duration of the game – four 5-minute quarters with 2-minutes between quarters and 5-minutes for half time.
- **U4 Coaches serve as referees for U4 games.** Work together with the coach of the other team to share refereeing and time-keeping duties throughout the game.
- Corner kicks, goal kicks, free kicks, penalty kicks, and throw-ins are not used in this age group. In the event that an egregious offense has been committed the referee should inform the player to not repeat it and play-on.
- For kickoffs, have the player kicking off pass the ball laterally to a teammate in the circle. The defending team should stand at least 5 yards back of the circle to allow the team kicking off to enter the offensive side of the field.
- When you team is on offense, do not have players stay back on defense or in goal (at least not intentionally); there are no goalies, and all players should be in the offensive zone when your team is on offense. (Again, there is leeway here, as players may be hesitant to run forward; simply try to encourage everyone to get involved in the offense as best you can.)
- **If the ball leaves the field of play the referee or coach should blow his or her whistle loudly and the referee or coach should retrieve the ball and roll it back onto the field as quickly as possible so play can resume.**
- Coaches should be flexible and work together to keep both teams moving and having fun. Again, at times during U4 scrimmages (and sometimes quite often), it will be difficult to maintain proper sides (as some players may not stay engaged). With these dynamics in mind, coaches should work together to keep play moving and to get all players as many touches on the ball as possible. Scrimmages may end up taking the form of clinics if it becomes difficult to maintain sides, as coaches work to ensure all the players on the field have the chance to dribble, pass, and shoot the ball.

To learn about the standard rules of soccer as they apply to older age groups, please see the KYSA U8 Soccer Rules Sheet as well as the NEFYSL Recreational League Rules and Regulations.

