

## 7U / 8U playing rules

**Ball size:** Size 3 soccer ball

**Number of players on the field:** Maximum of 4 per team on the field. There is no goal keeper in 4 v 4 soccer. A minimum of 3 players from each team must be present to start the game. If necessary for the game to be played when one team is short-handed, coaches shall share players.

**Number of players on the roster:** Maximum of 8. Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.

**Substitutions:** You may substitute players at the quarter break, on your team's throw-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 only allowed to play children rostered to your team. Playing ineligible players will result in disciplinary action by the league or state organization.

**Equipment:** Shinguards are required and must be worn inside the sock. Soft-cleated soccer shoes or tennis shoes are allowed. Baseball and football spikes are not allowed. No jewelry (including earrings), watches, hard hair bands or barrettes, or bracelets can be worn.

**Referees:** Game referees may be licensed referees or volunteers, depending upon the availability of licensed referees. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player. The referee is not to act as a coach, but may give helpful instructions to both teams. Only the referee and players--not coaches--are allowed on the field during play.

**Duration of the game:** The game is divided into 4 quarters of 10 minutes. The breaks between the first and second quarters and between the third and fourth quarters shall last only 1 minute each. The half-time break will last five minutes.

**Kick-offs:** Opponents should be five yards from the center mark while the kick-off is in progress. 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.

**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 play.

**Scoring:** The entire ball must cross the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar for a goal to be scored. Although there are no standings and scores are not recorded, it is each coach's responsibility not to run up the score.

**Off-side:** None; but an attacker may not be stationed inside the other team's goal area.

**Fouls and misconduct:** The referee will explain all infractions to the offending player. All fouls will result in an indirect free kick.

**Free kicks:** All free kicks will be indirect. A goal may not be scored from an indirect kick until the ball has been touched by a second player from either team. When a free kick is being taken, the other team's players must remain at least five yards away from the ball (except when the kick is taken within five yards of the goal, in which case defenders may stand on the goal line). No free kicks shall be taken by the attacking team within the defending team's goal area. There are no penalty kicks.

**Throw-ins:** Both hands must be used to throw the ball in. The ball must start from behind the player's head and pass over it. The player throwing the ball in cannot play the ball again until it has been played or touched by another player from either team.

**Goal kicks:** A goal kick restarts the game after the ball entirely crosses the goal line (outside the goal) and is last touched by an attacker. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. Opponents must be five yards away from the ball. The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player from either team.

**Corner kicks:** A corner kick restarts the game after the ball crosses the goal line (outside the goal) and is last touched by a defender. The ball must be placed inside the corner arc. The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player of either team. Opponents must be five yards away from the ball.

**Injuries:** In case of injuries, it is up to the discretion of the referee and coaches whether to continue playing the game or to stop play.

**Location of fans:** Only coaches and players are allowed in the narrow area between two fields. Parents and other spectators are only allowed to be at the end of the fields or as otherwise indicated by the location of bleachers, and not directly behind or close to a goal. Parents are not allowed on the field.

### **Recommendations:**

**Safety and First Aid:** The coach is responsible for the health and safety of the players. You should have a first aid kit and your copy of the registration forms with you at every game and practice in case of injury. Also, AHFSH recommends that all players who wear glasses wear sport safety goggles. This will help prevent injuries to children who wear glasses as well as the other players.

Opposing coaches and players should shake hands after the game. Line the players on the center line to shake hands. Parents may form a tunnel to let the opposing team players and their own children run through the tunnel.

Parents should not coach or instruct players during the game and coaches are advised to refrain from over-coaching during the game.