

WESTERN SUBURBAN SOCCER LEAGUE
LAWS OF THE GAME – A GUIDE FOR REFEREES and COACHES
<http://wsslsoccer.org>

Revised Fall 2010

Games shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as published by FIFA, and the following WSSL modifications. http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/generic/81/42/36/lawsofthegame_2010_11_e.pdf

Law 1. The Field

All games shall be played on age appropriate sized fields (see Pre-game rules, #3).

6 v 6 Dimensions:	Length: minimum 45 yards	maximum 60 yards
	Width: minimum 35 yards	maximum 45 yards
Markings:	Center circle: 8 yd radius	Corner arc: 2 ft radius
	Penalty area: 14 yards	Goal Area: 6 yards
Goals:	6 ft x 18 ft (recommended)	(Penalty mark is 8 yards from the goal line)
8 v 8 Dimensions:	Length: minimum 70 yards	maximum 80 yards
	Width: minimum 40 yards	maximum 50 yards
Markings:	Center circle: 8 yd radius	Corner arc: 2 ft radius
	Penalty area: 14 yards	Goal Area: 6 yards
Goals:	7 ft x 21 ft (recommended)	(Penalty mark is 8 yards from the goal line)

Law 2. The Ball

Size #4 for age groups under 12 and younger

Size #5 for age groups under 13 and older.

Law 3. The Number of Players

6 v 6	maximum	five (5) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
	minimum	three (3) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
Roster:		maximum number of players on roster is eleven (11).
8 v 8	maximum	seven (7) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
	minimum	four (4) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
Roster:		maximum number of players on roster is fourteen (14).
HSO	maximum	five (5) field players + 1 goalkeeper
Small	minimum	three (3) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
Sided	Roster:	maximum of 22 on roster, maximum of 18 on game card

Substitution Procedure

A player who has been replaced may return to the game at a later time.

Substitutes shall be allowed in the following circumstances:

- a. Prior to a throw in by either team only if the team that has possession of the ball is making a substitution.
- b. Prior to a goal kick by either team.
- c. Prior to the game restart after a goal (kick off) by either team.
- d. During the interval between periods by either team. Referee notification is only required when the goalkeeper is substituted at this time.
- e. For a player(s) that has received a caution (yellow card) – the opposing may substitute a like number of players.
- f. For an injured player(s) – opposing team may substitute a like number of players.
- g. For a player(s) who is ejected (red card) from the game - neither team shall substitute, and the offending team shall play the game less the number of player(s) ejected. If, however, the goalkeeper is ejected, a substitute may replace another player of the same team so as to play as the goalkeeper. The offending team must still play with a reduced number of players reflecting the ejection of the goalkeeper.

If a player changes places with the goalkeeper without the referee's permission, the players concerned and coach will be issued a verbal admonition when the ball is next out of play. No free kick will be awarded, even if the new goalkeeper handles the ball.

Technical area: along one touch line between the two eighteen yard lines or if sideline is shared between the halfway line and eighteen yard line on their half of the field.

Law 4. The Players Equipment

The team color shall be the color of the shirt.

- a. Opposing teams shall wear shirts that are distinctively different in color.
- b. If opposing teams are the same color, the home team shall change to an alternate color of shirt.
- c. Each player reporting to a team shall have a non-repeating number that is at least four inches high and permanently attached to the back of the shirt. A number is not required on an alternate shirt.

Long pants may be worn in addition to the required uniform if they are of the same main color as the shorts. Long sleeve shirts may be worn underneath the required jersey.

Law 5. The Referee

Referee is appointed by the home teams club and paid according to the club's pay schedule.

The referee's jurisdiction shall be empowered either on the field of play or in the vicinity of the field at all times, prior to, during, or after the game.

A referee shall not officiate any game in which a relative is engaged as a player or coach.

A three official diagonal system shall be utilized for 8v8 and 11v11 games. In the event that less than three officials are present, the referee shall appoint club linesman as required. 6v6 games may be played with one referee.

The referee shall be at least one year older than the oldest player and be professionally dressed in full uniform.

If the designated referee has not reported to the field within fifteen minutes of the scheduled starting time, the opposing coaches may appoint a referee that is satisfactory to both coaches. In the event both coaches do not agree on an alternate referee then the visiting team has the option to re-schedule the game at their facilities (see pre-game rules #3). In the event that the referee reports after the game has started, it shall be the discretion of both coaches to permit the referee to take charge of the game. However, the game shall in no event be restarted.

Law 6. The Assistant Referees

6 v 6 (U9 & U10) Assistant Referees are not required (the offsides rule is not enforced).

An assistant referee shall not officiate any game in which a relative is engaged as a player or coach, unless acting as a club linesperson when duly appointed by the referee. Assistants should be professionally dressed in full uniform.

Law 7. The Duration of the Match

Periods of Play; the match shall last for two equal periods of:

- 45 minutes for age groups U17 & U18
- 40 minutes for age groups U15 & U16
- 35 minutes for age groups U13, U14, & High School Open
- 30 minutes for age groups U11 & U12
- 25 minutes for age groups U9 & U10

Law 8. The Start and Restart of Play

At the discretion of the referee the scheduled start of the game may be delayed a maximum of 15 minutes if a team has less than the minimum number of players including the goalkeeper on the field.

Minimum number of players: 11 v 11 play is 7 players, 8 v 8 play is 5 players, 6 v 6 play is 4 players.

6 v 6 Kickoff: A goal may not be scored directly from the kick-off. (Kick-offs are indirect, the same as free kicks)

Law 10. The Method of Scoring

Mercy rule (Recreation games only)

When the goal differential becomes 5, the team leading shall play with one player less. For each goal differential increase above 5, the leading team will remove one player until they reach the minimum number of players for that age group (Law 3). Whenever the losing team scores a goal and reduces the goal differential, the leading team can add a player back onto the field. but not to exceed the maximum number of players should the differential become 4 or less.

Law 11. Offside

6 v 6 (U9 & U10) The offside rule shall not be enforced.

Law 12. Fouls and Misconduct

Cautions are cumulative throughout the fall and spring seasons. If a player or coach receives three (3) cautions in a soccer year (fall/spring), they are disqualified for the next scheduled league contest.

A player or coach who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area. The ejected individual shall physically retreat to an area designated by the referee. An ejected coach or player cannot return to the vicinity of the field at any time even after the game has ended.

Law 13. Free Kicks

6 v 6 All free kicks shall be indirect including fouls within the penalty area, except for a flagrant foul within the penalty area which shall be penalized by a penalty kick. (A flagrant foul is defined as “excessive contact committed by a player against an opponent”).

6 v 6 and 8 v 8 All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.

Law 14. The Penalty Kick

6 v 6 and 8 v 8 All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball. Penalty mark is 8 yards from the goal line. (Note 6 v 6: penalty kick is only to be awarded for a flagrant foul * within the penalty area).

A penalty kick must be taken from the designated penalty mark, regardless of the field conditions at the mark.

Law 17. The Corner Kick

6 v 6 and 8 v 8 All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.

If the field conditions with the corner arc are adverse to taking the kick, the referee may allow the kick to be taken at the nearest location where the field conditions are suitable.

Pre-Game Rules

1. Where possible, teams must take opposite sides of the field for their bench, unless mutually agreed otherwise by both coaches. In the event that both teams must share one side of the field, each team shall limit their bench and sideline activities between the halfway line and one penalty area line. The home coach has first choice.
2. The home team shall be responsible for the condition of the field. Field marking and proper equipment such as goal nets and corner flags are considered necessary for a WSSL sponsored game. Home team shall provide the game ball.
3. In the event that the game must be cancelled because the designated referee does not arrive and an alternate referee cannot be agreed upon by both coaches or that there are no appropriately sized fields available at the location within ½ hour of the originally scheduled game time. Then the visiting team has the option to re-schedule the game at their facilities with the original home team responsible for paying the referees fees at the original visiting team’s pay rate.

4. Each club shall provide each coach with copies of the team roster containing all required WSSL information. Three copies of the GotSoccer game card shall be provided by the home team for each scheduled game including a mailing envelop. Coaches or team officials shall submit completely filled out Game Cards to the referee prior to the game. It is the responsibility of the coach to document all players/team officials that are sitting out due to red/yellow cards, team discipline, injuries, etc. Also, to write in any pass card players that will be participating in the game. Note: Player pass cards are required for select teams. A WSSL game shall be deemed a forfeit if the game report is not given to the referee before the start of the 2nd half. Should it be necessary, the referee may forward the game report to the Ref and Rules Chief for possible action.
5. Both teams, including coaches, shall be required to exchange handshakes in the middle of the field prior to the start of the game. The referee shall report any offending team, player, or coach, to the Ref & Rules Committee. Failure to comply with this rule shall be interpreted as unsporting behavior.
6. Coaching from the sidelines shall be conducted in a constrained and reasonable manner, and shall only occur in the technical area between the penalty area lines, limited to own side of the field. No coach, substitute player, or spectator shall be allowed beyond the penalty area line or at either end of the field while play is in progress.
7. No mechanical, electrical, or radio-controlled devices shall be allowed for coaching purposes during the game.
8. Verbal criticism of the referee or assistant referees during the game by coaches, spectators, or players will not be allowed. The coach shall be deemed responsible for the actions of their team, asst. coaches, and spectators.
9. Each player reporting to a team, who is present at the start of the game, shall play at least ½ of the game (1/3 for select teams) unless injured or suspended by the home club or WSSL which shall be noted on the game report.

WSSL Club Passcard Player Rules

1. Only WSSL Select team players can be passcarded to other select teams within their same WSSL Club.
2. A passcarded player must be from the same Club and on a WSSL approved official team roster of a lesser ranked team:
 - a. A division lower.
 - b. An age group younger, but no more than two years.
 - c. A girl's team to a boy's team of the same year
 - d. Same division, the lower ranked team must be identified prior to the start of the season.
3. The maximum times a passcarded player may be passcarded is two times in a week.
 - a. The week is defined as starting on Sunday and ending on Saturday.
 - b. A player's history of play is the responsibility of the coach using the passcarded player.
 - c. Violations will result in a game forfeit and a 1 game suspension for both the player and coach.
4. A maximum of 5 individual players can be passcarded to a team at any single game.
 - a. The total number of players per team including passcarded players cannot exceed the age group roster maximum as follows: U8, U9, U10 is 11, U11 and U12 is 14 and U13Y and above is 18
5. Prior to the start of the game, the coach using the passcarded player(s) must list the passcarded player(s) on the WSSL/GotSoccer Game Card. And must have available for the referee and opposing team coach, two items of proof that validate the passcarded player(s):
 - a. The WSSL approved official team roster with the passcarded player.
 - b. The WSSL approved official player passcard with photograph of the passcarded player.
6. Passcarded players can only be used for WSSL Select League games.
7. Passcarded players are only eligible to be passcarded if free of suspensions

Postponed or Abandoned Games

All games shall be played on the scheduled date, time, and field. Refusal to play a scheduled game shall result in forfeiture by the offending team, unless the game is postponed or abandoned.

Each club determines the status of their fields and playing conditions, and reserves the right to postpone games. Only the referee, a city or club official, or a community leader may abandon or postpone a game.

If a game must be postponed because of a conflict or error, you must give at least 72 hours notice to the opposing team plus notify the league administrator and scorekeeper, and the home club referee assignor. Reschedules must be limited, and the WSSL reserves the right to deny requests. When games are to be rescheduled, the rescheduling shall be completed promptly; and the date, time, and place, must be agreed to by both teams.

If a game is abandoned prior to the start of the second half for recreation teams or prior to 2/3rds being played for select teams, the game shall be void and not counted as a game played, although the penalties for misconduct shall not be voided. All cautions (yellow cards) and/or ejections (red cards) shall be recorded and penalties shall be enforced. If a game is abandoned after the start of the second half (recreation team games), the game is counted as a game played and the score at the time of the abandonment is the official score. Select teams must complete 2/3rds of the game for it to be counted as a game played and the score to be official.

Post-Game Rules

The referee shall record the score and all cautions and send-offs on the GotSoccer game cards after the game is completed. The referee shall include an explanation for all send-offs on the back of the GotSoccer game cards. A team official from each team shall review all information and sign confirming that the game card is correct. An official from the winning team (or the home team in the case of a tie) is responsible for reporting the score and any cautions and/or send-offs using the GotSoccer phone-in system and mailing one copy of the game card to the WSSL Scorekeeper at PO Box 702367 Plymouth, MI 48170. This must be completed within 48 hours of the game.

The following numbers and/or letters shall be used in the caution and send-off columns of the game card to indicate the type of misconduct.

Cautions: 1) Unsporting Behavior, 2) Dissent, 3) Persistent Infringement, 4) Delays the restart, 5) Failure to respect the required distance on a restart, 6) Enters the field without the referees permission, 7) Deliberately leaves the field without the referees permission.

Send-off: A) Serious Foul Play, B) Violent Conduct, C) Spitting at an opponent or any other person, D) Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity by handling the ball, E) Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick, F) Using Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures, G) receiving a second caution in the same match.

Protests

Protests will be entertained for rule violations only. Referee judgment is final and cannot be protested. All protests must be on the official form from our website and include a \$50 fee (payable to WSSL) and delivered to the WSSL administrator within 48 hrs of the game. A club official must approve any potential protest before it is submitted to the WSSL. If you win the protest, your fee will be returned.

Penalties for Ejection's

The following are the penalties that have been established by the WSSL for a coach or player receiving an ejection (red card) in conjunction with any WSSL game. The following penalties may also be imposed on a coach or player based on the referee's report even though an ejection (red card) was not issued at the time of the incident.

All suspensions are in addition to the game in which the person was ejected. All suspensions shall apply to the next physically played WSSL game, whether or not such game is within the same season. A forfeited game, cancelled game, or postponed game is not considered a played game. Suspensions that are not served do carry over to the following year.

Behavior towards referee(s)

Continuous criticism/harassment (dissent):	1 Game
Offensive, insulting or abusive language, obscene gesture:	2 Games
Assault (as defined by USSF):	See section on "Special Hearing"

Behavior towards another player, a substitute, or a coach

Offensive, insulting or abusive language, obscene gesture:	2 Games
Inciting a fight:	2 Games
Violent conduct (as defined by USSF):	2 Games

Intention foul play where there is an obvious attempt to inflict serious bodily harm:	4 Games
Fighting	Season (minimum of 8 games)
Intentional foul play which results in serious bodily harm:	See section on "Special Hearing"

Behavior towards a spectator

Offensive, insulting or abusive language, obscene gesture: 2 Games
Violent conduct (as defined by USSF): 3 Games

General misconduct

Repeated misconduct in a game: 1 Game

Additional suspensions

If a player or team official is suspended a second time in the same season for any reason, two (2) additional games shall be added to the suspension.

If a player is suspended a third time within a period of the current season plus the three preceding seasons, three (3) games shall be added to the suspension.

Additional suspensions for coaches

In so far as a coach is responsible for teaching good sporting behavior to the players, and should set himself/herself as an example, any misconduct on his/her part shall be considered more than that of a player. Therefore, all suspensions for coaches shall be double those of players with the following exceptions:

- a. Any coach guilty of violent conduct toward a player shall be subject to a special hearing. See Special Hearing.
- b. A coach ejected due to misconduct on the part of his/her spectator(s) shall receive a one (1) game suspension, if in the opinion of the reporting referee the coach made a reasonable attempt, or was otherwise unable, to restrain the spectator. If a coach was able to restrain the spectator, but made no attempt to do so, he/she shall receive a two (2) game suspension.

Special hearing

In these situations, a special hearing will be conducted by an ad hoc committee as appointed by the WSSL Board. If the assault charge is verified, a suspension will be recommended to the Board based upon the severity of the case with a minimum of an eight (8) game suspension to a maximum of a lifetime suspension. In addition to the suspension the offending person will be reported to the MSYSA. Any suspension issued by the WSSL shall be considered a minimum suspension and will be subject only to additional suspensions awarded by higher authorities.

Penalties for Cautions

Cautions (yellow cards) are issued at the discretion of the referee. If a player or team official receives numerous cautions throughout the soccer year (fall/spring), the following penalties (suspensions) shall apply.

Third caution in a soccer year, but not in the same game 1 Game

Fourth caution in a soccer year, but not in the same game 1 Game

If a caution results in an ejection (2nd caution in a game) and the player or coach has received 1 or more cautions previously than the suspension would be 1 game for ejection + 1 game for the third caution. Additional suspensions could also apply, see additional suspensions section.

Playing Suspended Players

Any coach who allows a player to play in a game, during which that player was to serve a suspension, shall receive a two (2) game suspension. Repeat offenses by the same coach shall result in a Disciplinary hearing. Any team which allows a player to play in a game during which that player was to serve a suspension, shall suffer a forfeit of that game and may be subject to a fine set by the WSSL board.

Participation by Suspended Team Officials

Any coach who allows a team official (coach, asst. coach, manager, etc.) to participate in a game, during which that team official was to serve a suspension, shall receive a two (2) game suspension. Repeat offenses by the same coach shall result in a Disciplinary hearing. Any team which allows a team official to participate in a game, during which that team official was to serve a suspension, shall suffer a forfeit of that game and may be subject to a fine set by the WSSL board.

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