

Fall Core Division Guide



AYSO Region **114**

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ALL DIVISIONS

Sideline Conduct and Treatment of Referees

1. **COACHES, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF YOUR SIDELINES.** Have a conversation with your parents about expected AYSO behavior. Rule of thumb: tell your parents to cheer what just happened. Ask them to not sideline coach. **COACHES MAY BE GIVEN YELLOW/RED CARDS FOR CONDUCT OF THEIR SIDELINES.** This may result in a suspension.
2. **Never talk to opposing players, spectators, or coaches.** If there is an issue with another coach, team or its players, or ANYBODY, **do not take matters into your own hands.** Bring it to the attention of Region 114 Referee Administrator or Region 114 Coach Administrator.
3. **DO NOT ENTER THE FIELD** unless called upon by the referee. Even if a player is injured. Coaches are responsible for ensuring their spectators do not run on the field.
4. **DO NOT TALK DISPARAGINGLY TO OR ABOUT REFEREES.** They are volunteers like you, and without referees there are no games!
5. **Dissent may lead to game forfeiture, suspension from future matches, or more.**

Region 114 has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy regarding dissent to youth referees. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIONS OF YOUR SPECTATORS.

NO PETS are allowed at any AYSO soccer activity.

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Everyone plays 3 quarters!

1. AYSO games 5U – 14U are divided into quarters. Quarter breaks are quick 1 minute water breaks for substitutions to be made. (Quarter breaks are not long breaks for giving instruction. These are quick breaks for waters and to give substitutions and positions.) The clock runs during quarter breaks. Halftime should be 5 minutes max.
2. Region 114 adheres to a “three quarters” playing time rule. This means All players must play three quarters before any player plays four quarters. In other words, no player may play a full game while another player sits twice. The only exceptions are injury and late arrival.
3. If someone must sit twice due to roster size, rotate which player(s) sit twice; this should not be the same player each match.
4. In 5U – 14U matches, substitutions may only be made at quarters and halftime (except for injury). In 16U-19U we expect coaches to follow the same $\frac{3}{4}$ philosophy, by monitoring “bench time.”

Injury Substitutions

If an injured player exits you may replace them with a substitute, or you may play with one fewer player until the injured player is ready to return.

If substituted, the injured player may *not* return in that quarter (5U-14U).

If you choose to not, the injured player may only return when the Referee permits it.

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Practices

1. Region 114 teams practice at Heartwell Park East, between Woodruff and Palo Verde. **Never practice at Heartwell West** (Fields 1 -5, between Bellflower and Woodruff); that is reserved for a different soccer organization.
2. Practice at, or near, your assigned fields. (For safety, we do not want 4-year-olds practicing next to 14-year-olds.) Any requests to practice elsewhere must be approved by the Coach Administrator.



Player Safety and Uniforms

1. All team members must wear matching uniforms. Only jerseys (tops) supplied by Region 114 are allowed. Teams may purchase their own shorts or socks, but all players must match.
2. All players must wear shin guards completely covered by socks and have appropriate athletic footwear. (Cleats are not required, but baseball/football cleats are not permitted.)
3. Players may not wear jewelry or hard accessories of any kind – earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, hard hair beads/bands/barrettes, etc. Covering jewelry/accessories with tape is **not** permitted. The *only* exception is Medical ID bracelet, which may be worn but must be taped.
4. In the event of any incident (injury, property damage, threats, fights, etc.) a team's verified volunteer must immediately complete an [Incident Report Form](#).
5. Once the match has begun, **never enter the field of play** unless instructed to by the Referee.

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Match Day Reminders

1. (U7 and above) Coaches or Team Parents must [print a lineup card](#). Use card stock when possible. **Players must be listed in jersey order** (smallest to largest jersey number), with both first and last names of all players. Do **not** fill out anything else such as quarters played; the referees do that.
2. Game times/locations are posted to Matchtrak.com.
3. (U10 and above) Either team may submit the final score to Matchtrak.
4. Both Home and Away teams with the **first** game on a field are responsible for setting up goals / nets / corner flags on that field. This is indicated by a 🌟 icon next to your game in Matchtrak.com.
5. Both Home and Away teams with the **final** game on a field are responsible for returning goals to their storage location (see [Region 114 Fields Page](#)). This is indicated by a 🗑️ icon in Matchtrak.com.

Coaching Reminders – once the match starts

1. Coaches must stay in technical area -- approximately the diameter of the center circle.
2. No coaching near goals. Any adults coaching or talking to players near goals will be asked to move.
3. Coaches may not enter the field *unless invited by the Referee*.
4. **Parents are never allowed onto the field**, unless invited by the Head Coach (e.g., in case of serious injury). Entering the field of play without the Referee's permission is an offense warranting a yellow card.
5. Do not allow your touchlines to coach players. That is your job. Their job is to cheer.
6. **Do not express dissent towards referee calls through words, actions, or gestures.**

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Preventing & Managing Lopsided Scores (“Blowouts”)

What is a Blowout & Why Avoid It?

- **Definition:** A blowout is generally considered a score difference of 5 goals or more.
- **Coach Responsibility:** Coaches are responsible for taking steps to prevent blowouts.
- **Consequences:** Failing to manage the score proactively may result in game forfeiture, coach suspension, or team exclusion from playoffs.

The goal is to keep the game challenging and developmental for *your* team while remaining respectful and sportsmanlike towards your opponents.

Be Proactive: Identify and Act Early

- A potential blowout can often be recognized early, sometimes by the second unanswered goal.
- Address the situation *before* the score reaches a 5-goal difference. Waiting until it's 5-0 is too late.

Communicate Respectfully

- If a game is becoming lopsided, discreetly speak with the opposing coach and Referee when possible. Briefly explain your plan or ask for their input.
- This communication helps manage emotions and ensures everyone understands adjustments being made for the good of the game.

Avoid These Common Pitfalls:

1. Don't yell "Stop Scoring!": This is ineffective and demoralizing to both teams.
2. Don't bench strong players: Simply removing successful players sends the wrong message and doesn't help them develop. Challenge them appropriately (see below).
3. Don't move strong players only to defense/goal: While sometimes part of a solution, this can simply shift the problem, making it equally hard for the other team to score.

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Preventing & Managing Lopsided Scores (continued)

Implement Positive Challenges (A "Game within the Game"):

Shift your team's focus from simply scoring to achieving specific, challenging objectives. This keeps your players engaged and learning:

- **Possession Goals:**
 - Require a minimum number of connected passes (e.g., 5, 7, 10+) before *anyone* on the team can shoot. Increase the count if scoring is too easy.
 - Restart the count on every change of possession.
- **Challenge Players:**
 - Require they score only with their non-dominant ("weak") foot.
 - Require they score only on a one-touch finish.
 - Task them with assisting a specific teammate who hasn't scored yet.
- **Team Play Focus:**
 - Mandate that *everyone* must touch the ball in the offensive half before a shot is taken.
 - Implement a "Pass Back" rule: Every time possession is gained, the ball must be played back to the goalkeeper before moving forward again (practices building from the back).
 - Set a team objective to help a specific player (perhaps one less likely to score) get their first goal, with others focusing on creating the opportunity.
 - Allow only passing, no dribbling (or limited dribbling).
- **Player-Led Solutions:**
 - Stop active coaching for a period. Let the players figure out how to manage the game and possess the ball fairly on their own.

By using these strategies, you uphold AYSO's values, ensure a more positive experience for both teams, and provide valuable learning opportunities for your players beyond just scoring goals.

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U5 & U6 DIVISIONS (page 1 of 2)

Scores/Standings are not kept!

1. Format:

- a. 5v5 for U5, 6v6 for U6.
- b. Size 3 ball.
- c. Two 10-minute halves, with quarter breaks halfway through each half.
- d. Substitutions at halftime and quarter breaks.
- e. Clock runs during quarter breaks. This is not a full break, but a brief sip of water and substitution.
- f. **Scores and standings are not kept. Games are for development and fun.**
- g. No Goalkeepers. No child permanently guarding goal. No player should stand directly in front of the goal at ANY time. This is the most important rule for U5/U6. Kids love to run back and stand in front of goal. Make sure and remind kids to “get out of the goal.”
- h. Lineup cards and not used at U5&U6.
- i. **4 and 5 year-olds don't know, or care about, the score. Only adults do. Don't be the coach/parent going for a “win” or getting upset with the other team at a 4-year-old's soccer match.**

2. Referees / Offenses / Sanctions:

- a. No referees at U5-U6.
- b. Coaches “ref” their own games. (Basically this is coaching/encouraging both teams.)
- c. **ONLY ONE** coach per team allowed on field at a time to “ref”. The objective, especially at U6, is for coaches to be off field by end of season.

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U5 & U6 DIVISIONS (page 2 of 2)

3. Match Rules / variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game:

- a. Very little enforcement of Laws.
- b. If ball rolls out of bounds but kids are still engaging, then let them keep playing.
- c. Do not needlessly stop play. This includes hand balls. Just yell “keep playing.” Remind parents of this.
- d. Nobody, but coaches, are allowed on the field at any time. This includes when players get injured.
Parents are NOT allowed to run on field and tend children unless called onto field by coaches.
- e. Positions are not encouraged. Players should be encouraged to follow the action. Reminding kids to spread out is good. Do not have players standing near their goal entire game “on defense”. (The field isn’t big enough, and they’re basically goalies.)
- f. When other team restarts ball with goal kick, opposing team should back up to *at least* the halfway line. The aim is to give both teams a fair chance to pass and dribble and shoot.
- g. If a coach wants to have their players do throw-ins, or wants their players to pass the ball in with the foot, both are fine. Just roll with it. Let the kids have fun and keep playing.

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U7/U8 DIVISIONS (page 1 of 2)

Scores/Standings are not kept!

1. Format / Minimum Playing Time / Positions:

- 7v7 with goalkeepers (6 in the field, plus 1 in goal). U7 coaches, with approval of Referee, may agree to play 8v8 (not for U8 as field gets too crowded).
- Size 3 ball.
- Game halves: 20 minutes. Substitutions: At each “quarter” (roughly halfway through each half), and at half. Clock runs during quarter break. Quarter breaks are quick sips of water and substitution.
- 3/4 playing rule** (no player may play 4 quarters until all have played 3 quarters). Exceptions are injury and late arrival. If a player must sit twice due to roster size, this shall not be the same player every week.
- Goalkeeper restrictions:** A player may not play goalkeeper more than **ONE** quarter per match.

2. Referees / Offenses / Sanctions:

- Only one Referee (most will be youth Referees).
- Youth Referees are NOT to be talked to**, except to be thanked for their service.
- Any issues with Referees should be brought to the Regional Coach AND Referee Administrators.
- Liberal enforcement of laws (most handballs and throw-in violations are ignored).
- Referees are instructed by region to rarely stop action; lots of “don’t stop,” and “get up, keep playing.”
- Goalkeeper violations will not be strictly enforced, and often corrected with a warning and not penalized. E.g., putting ball down and picking back up, or handling of a deliberate pass back.
- No offside violations (however, players are discouraged from “cherry picking” near the opponent’s goal).
- Referees are discouraged from showing yellow or red cards to players in these age divisions, but they may ask coaches to have a player take a break due to unsporting behavior.
- Coaches may be given yellow or red cards for their conduct or conduct of spectators on their touchline.** All cards will be reviewed by the region, but the on-field call stands and is per the final judgment of the Referee. Red cards will result in a MINIMUM suspension for the coach for the next game; this is not subject to review or appeal. Referees will pause play until the coach or spectator who has been shown red card (sent-off) has removed themselves completely from the vicinity of the field of play, and play will not resume until they have done so. Yellow cards can also result in a suspension.

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U7/U8 DIVISIONS (page 2 of 2)

3. Match Rules / variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game:

- a. No drop kicks or punts from goalkeeper. Goalkeepers dropping or intentionally bouncing the ball to a teammate to punt, in an attempt to circumvent this guideline, will not be permitted. Referees may warn or caution (yellow card) coaches for persistent offenses.
- b. No intentional heading of the ball. Referees may stop play for both intentional and unintentional heading to ensure the safety of all players.
- c. When ball is out of play, the restart is either a corner kick, goal kick, or throw-in. (*No pass-ins or kick-ins.*)
- d. All fouls occurring while the ball is in play result in Free Kicks.
- e. No penalty kicks. Free Kicks for offenses committed by the defending team inside their own penalty area are to be taken on the penalty area line which runs parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the offense occurred.
- f. Opposing team must retreat behind build-out-line for goal kicks and keeper possession. Opposing team may not “break” build-out-line until ball is kicked (goal kick) or released from keeper’s possession.
- g. No team should score more than 5 points than their opponent. Score deficits greater than 5 will be reviewed by the region. (See **Avoid Blowouts.**)

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U10 DIVISION (page 1 of 2)

1. Format / Minimum Playing Time / Positions:

- a. 7v7 with goalkeepers (6 in the field, plus 1 in goal).
- b. Size 4 ball.
- c. Game halves: 25 minutes. Substitutions: At each “quarter” break (roughly halfway through each half), and at half. Clock runs during quarter break. Quarter breaks are quick sips of water and substitution.
- d. **3/4 playing rule** (no player may play 4 quarters before all players have played 3 quarters). Exceptions are injury and late arrival. Referees are not expected to enforce playing time requirements; offenses of playing time requirements will be reviewed by the region and may result in forfeit.
- e. If a player must sit twice due to roster size, this shall not be the same player every week.
- f. **Goalkeeper restrictions:** Any player in goal **MUST** play at least one quarter not-in-goal. Offenses of playing time requirements will be reviewed by the region and may result in forfeit.

2. Referees / Offenses / Sanctions:

- a. Three match officials are required: Referee (aka “Center”) and two Assistant Referees (aka “linesman”).
- b. **Youth Referees are NOT to be talked to**, except to be thanked for their service.
- c. Any issues with Referees should be brought to the Regional Coach AND Referee Administrators.
- d. Referees are instructed by the region to stay off whistle in order to allow continuous play with minimal interruption. Stoppages for minor injuries as players learn to become more resilient.
- e. Handball vs. protecting self: Referees will not be strict about unintentional handballs (e.g., when a child is trying to protect their face from the ball).
- f. Throw-in enforcement increases as the season progresses. Some Referees will have do-overs. Some Referees will just warn. Some Referees will be stricter with enforcement.
- g. Referees are discouraged from showing yellow or red cards to players in these age divisions, but they may require coaches to have a player take a break due to unsporting behavior or dissent.
- h. **Coaches may be given yellow or red cards for their conduct or conduct of spectators on their touchline.** All cards will be reviewed by the region, but the on-field call stands and is per the final judgment of the Referee. Red cards will result in a MINIMUM suspension for the coach for the next game; this is not subject to review or appeal. Referees will pause play until the coach or spectator who

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has been shown red card (sent-off) has removed themselves completely from the vicinity of the field of play, and play will not resume until they have done so. Yellow cards can also result in a suspension.

U10 DIVISION (page 2 of 2)

3. Match Rules / variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game:

- a. The opposing team must retreat behind build-out-line for goal kicks and keeper possession. Opposing team may not “break” build-out-line until ball is kicked (goal kick) or released from keeper’s possession.
- b. No intentional heading of ball—violation is an indirect free kick. Indirect free kicks awarded to the attacking team inside the opposing team’s goal area must be taken on the goal area line which runs parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the offense occurred.
- c. No drop kicks or punts for goalkeepers; goalkeepers dropping or intentionally bouncing the ball to a teammate to punt in an attempt to circumvent this guideline will not be permitted. Referees may warn or caution (yellow card) coaches for persistent offenses.
- d. No team should score more than 5 points than their opponent. Score deficits greater than 5 will be reviewed by the region. (See **Avoid Blowouts.**)

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U12 DIVISION (page 1 of 1)

1. Format / Minimum Playing Time / Positions:

- a. 9v9 with goalkeepers (8 in the field, plus 1 in goal).
- b. Size 4 ball.
- c. Game halves: 30 minutes.
- d. Substitutions: At each “quarter” break (roughly halfway through each half), and at half. Clock runs during quarter break. Quarter breaks are quick sips of water and substitution (1 – 2 minutes max).
- e. **3/4 playing rule** (no player may play 4 quarters before all players have played 3 quarters). Exceptions are injury and late arrival. Referees are not expected to enforce playing time requirements; offenses of playing time requirements will be reviewed by the region and may result in forfeit.
- f. If a player must sit twice due to roster size, this should be the same player every week.
- g. **Goalkeeper restrictions:** There are no goalkeeper restrictions at U11/U12.

2. Referees / Offenses / Sanctions:

- a. Three match officials are required for every game: Referee (aka “Center”) and two Assistant Referees (aka “linesman”). **Youth Referees are NOT to be talked to**, except to be thanked for their service.
- b. Any issues with Referees should be brought to the Regional Coach AND Referee Administrators.
- c. Stricter enforcement of Laws of the Game. Referees are still instructed to not call trifling violations.
- d. Coaches may receive yellow or red cards for their own conduct or the conduct of spectators on their touchline. All cards will be reviewed by the region, but the on-field call stands and is per the final judgment of the Referee. Red cards (send-offs) will result in a MINIMUM suspension for the coach for the next game, and this is not subject to review or appeal. Referees will pause play until the coach or spectator who has been shown red card (sent-off) has removed themselves completely from the vicinity of the field of play, and play will not resume until they have done so. Yellow cards may also result in a suspension.

3. Match Rules / variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game:

- a. No deliberate heading of the ball; restart is indirect free kick.
- b. Goalkeeper *may* drop or punt kick.

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U14 DIVISION (page 1 of 1)

1. Format / Minimum Playing Time / Positions:

- a. 11v11 with goalkeepers (10 in the field, plus 1 in goal).
- b. Size 5 ball.
- c. Game halves: 35 minutes.
- d. Substitutions: At each “quarter” break (roughly halfway through each half), and at half. Clock runs during quarter break. Quarter breaks are quick sips of water and substitution (1 – 2 minutes max).
- e. **3/4 playing rule.** Coaches are expected to monitor playing time and assure adherence to $\frac{3}{4}$ playing time requirements. Offenses of playing time requirements will be reviewed by the region and may result in forfeit.

2. Referees / Offenses / Sanctions:

- a. Three match officials are required for every game: Referee (aka “Center”) and two Assistant Referees (aka “linesman”).
- b. Any issues with Referees should be brought to the Regional Coach AND Referee Administrators.
- c. Developmentally appropriate enforcement of Laws of the Game.
- d. Coaches may receive yellow or red cards for their own conduct or the conduct of spectators on their touchline. All cards will be reviewed by the region, but the on-field call stands and is per the final judgment of the Referee. Red cards (send-offs) will result in a MINIMUM suspension for the coach for the next game, and this is not subject to review or appeal. Referees will pause play until the coach or spectator who has been shown red card (sent-off) has removed themselves completely from the vicinity of the field of play, and play will not resume until they have done so. Yellow cards may also result in a suspension.

3. Match Rules / variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game:

- a. No significant variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game (other than substitutions and playing time requirements described above).

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U16 & U19 DIVISIONS (page 1 of 1)

1. Format / Minimum Playing Time / Positions:

- a. 11v11 with goalkeepers (10 in the field, plus 1 in goal).
- b. Size 5 ball.
- c. Game halves: 40 minutes. (No quarters; halves only.)
- d. Substitutions: “free” substitutions. This is still AYSO, and all Coaches are expected to abide by the six philosophies including **Everyone Plays**.
- e. **3/4 playing rule**. Coaches are expected to monitor playing time and assure adherence to $\frac{3}{4}$ playing time requirements. Offenses of playing time requirements will be reviewed by the region and may result in forfeit.

2. Referees / Offenses / Sanctions:

- a. Three match officials are required for every game: Referee (aka “Center”) and two Assistant Referees (aka “linesman”).
- b. Any issues with Referees should be brought to the Regional Coach AND Referee Administrators.
- c. Developmentally appropriate enforcement of Laws of the Game.
- d. Coaches may receive yellow or red cards for their own conduct or the conduct of spectators on their touchline. All cards will be reviewed by the region, but the on-field call stands and is per the final judgment of the Referee. Red cards (send-offs) will result in a MINIMUM suspension for the coach for the next game, and this is not subject to review or appeal. Referees will pause play until the coach or spectator who has been shown red card (sent-off) has removed themselves completely from the vicinity of the field of play, and play will not resume until they have done so. Yellow cards may also result in a suspension.

3. Match Rules / variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game:

- a. No significant variations from standard IFAB Laws of the Game (other than substitutions and playing time requirements described above).

NOTE: The U16-U19 Fall Season ends early (typically the end of October or first weekend in November). This is due to CIF SoCal Rules prohibiting players from playing on other teams once the High School soccer season begins.

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