



AYSO 1408 SUMTER COUNTY SOCCER CLUB



U8 Guidelines

The Field: The field size for U8 games is 25-35 yards long and 15-25 yards wide.

The Markings: There should be distinctive lines. A halfway line marks the width of the field and is at an equal distance from both goal lines.

The Goals: The maximum height is four feet, and the width is six yards.

The Ball: A size 3 ball is used for U8 games.

The Players: Four to five per team on field during games; No goalkeepers. Eight maximum on roster.

Substitutions: Allowed between quarters, at halftime, and for injuries. On hot days, exceptions will be made to substitute "as needed".

Playing Time: Each player must participate in a minimum of two quarters per game. No player should participate in four quarters until all players have had the opportunity to play three quarters. There will be a 5-minute water break.

Player Equipment: Shin guards must be covered by socks and are mandatory for all practices and games. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes, or similar athletic footwear are acceptable. Cleats are recommended and must be inspected for safety. In AYSO U8 soccer, players' jerseys must be tucked inside their shorts.

Duration of Game: The game consists of four 10-minute quarters with a 5-minute halftime and 1-minute breaks for substitutions. Parents should cheer positively but avoid coaching from the sidelines, as this confuses players. This time is for the kids to play.

8U Officials: AYSO-certified U8 Officials or higher are required for games. They should explain any infringements to the players briefly and encourage proper play and sportsmanship. Efforts should be made to keep the game moving and minimize stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let the players enjoy the game. Coaches are not allowed on the field to promote a higher level of play.

The Start of Play: The game shall start with a kick-off at the center of the field.



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The Kick-off: A coin toss determines which team will kick off at the beginning of the game, while the other team will kick off at the start of the second half. During the kick-off, opponents must stay eight yards from the center mark. A forward pass is mandated.

Ball In and Out of Play: The ball is out of play when it fully crosses the touch line or goal line, whether on the ground or in the air.

Method of Scoring: A goal is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line and enters the goal. Goals can only be scored from outside the painted goal box on the field. Any goal scored from within the goal box (including the line) will not be counted, and play will resume with a goal kick. Players should not remain stationary in front of the goal, pretending to be a goalkeeper. However, the defending team may enter the goal box to defend against an attack by the opposing team, but a defending player may not stand inside the goal box during active play of the attacking team scoring a goal, a corner kick will be awarded if no goal is scored.

Fouls: In U8 games, the opposing team must stay at least ten feet from the ball during free kicks. Common deliberate fouls include kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, handling the ball, and dangerous play. Officials should avoid stopping play of minor technical violations that do not disrupt the game flow. Let the players enjoy the game. Free kicks should be awarded to the team that merits it.

Misconduct: Misconduct should be uncommon in U8 games with players and coaches. Publicly cautioning or sending off young players is unnecessary; therefore, red and yellow cards should not be used. Officials are encouraged to collaborate with the coach when a player may require a brief period of suspension from play.

Free Kicks: All free kicks in U8 are indirect (to a teammate). Opponents must be at least ten feet from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during a free kick. Free kicks for the attacking team inside the defending team's goal area are taken from the nearest point on the goal area line parallel to the goal line.

Offside: No offside.

Throw-In: Throw-ins are taken from the touchline where the ball went out of play. The player must stand behind the touchline with both feet on the ground and throw the ball into the field of play using an overhead throw. Opponents must be ten feet away from the ball. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in. Another player must touch the ball before it enters the goal.

Goal Kick: A goal kick is awarded to the opposing team, when the attacking team is the last to touch the ball before it crosses out of bounds between the goal post and corner post. The kick can be taken from anywhere inside the goal area. The opposing team must be at least ten feet away when the kick is taken.



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Corner Kick: A corner kick is awarded to the opposing team when the defending team is the last to touch the ball before it crosses out of bounds between the goal post and corner post. The opposing team must be at least ten feet from the ball when the corner kick is taken. If a team scores an own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Handling or "Hand Ball": A handling infraction occurs when a player deliberately handles the ball. The term 'hand' includes the entire arm up to the top of the shoulder. Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age. Accidental contact, where the ball strikes the hand or arm without intent by the player, is not considered an offense and should not be penalized.

No Heading: Heading the ball is prohibited. An indirect free kick will be given to the opposing team if a player deliberately touches the ball with their head during a match (taken from the spot where the player touched the ball with their head).

Coach Training:

AYSO offers a valuable training resource for all registered volunteers on the AYSO University website. Access it at <https://aysou.org/>, then navigate to "Online Courses". There are required courses for every volunteer:

- AYSO Safe Haven
- CDC: Concussion Course
- Cardiac Arrest
- SafeSport

Questions? Contact us via phone @352-399-8312 OR via email: scysc1408@gmail.com