

TIPS FOR NEW REFEREES

1. Know the Laws

Inside and out, that is. Of particular importance to new referees are the correct restarts for given situations. Nothing can help to keep coaches and players off your back better than demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the Laws of the Game (LOTG) and their application.

2. Stay on top of (follow) the play

One can easily invite arguments and grief by making (or missing) calls when not close to the play. Work hard to stay with play and you'll call a better game.

3. Act like you're human

This is a big one. There are still some of the "I'm the boss and that's the way it's going to be so don't even try to talk to me" referees out there, but if you don't act infallible you'll be more credible to coaches and players.

4. Arrive early at the game site

5. Be prepared

Make sure you have everything you need before you get to the field.

6. Look sharp, act like a professional

Even if you don't do this for a living, look and act like a professional. It helps gain respect and helps you have pride in your work.

7. Learn from other referees

Talking with other referees (or for that matter, being assessed) is a great way to learn about the game. Use the Referee Mentoring if available.

8. Stay in game shape

This may seem to be inextricably linked with number two above, but some referees are in good physical shape and don't go anywhere near the play. Even U12's can make you hustle, so keep your body ready. If you don't get a good workout doing a game, you're probably not doing your job effectively (or the game is entirely one-sided).

9. Read, study, attend seminars, watch and learn

Read about refereeing and watch as many games as possible. This includes games done by peer referees, TV games, etc. While watching high-level games, anticipate the calls and compare what you'd call with what high-level referees call (or don't call). Read AYSO "Guidance for Referees and Coaches". Read and re read "Advice to Referees". Prepare yourself and take the Intermediate Referee badge upgrade course.

10. Don't get emotionally involved with the game

I believe that seeing a referee lose his or her temper is a sign that he or she is losing control of the match. Remember that the foul is nothing personal to you, so don't get mad...just officiate the match.

11. Don't be too quick with the whistle

As you get better you'll learn to slow the whistle down and think about the situation.

12. Don't do two-handed signals

This is a problem with many, many referees...even some professionals; it confuses everyone on the field. Don't have two hands out in two directions at one time. Clearly indicate direction for the restart, then show the spot of ball placement if you need to.