**Recreation Outreach Ministry**

**Soccer Rules Fall 2025**

# Game Play Rules and Format

1. If play is restarted with a kick, the opposing team must stay at least 8 yards back in each division except Beginners (ages 5-6 years), who are only 5 yards back.
2. There will be penalty kicks assessed for fouls in the penalty box for all ages except Beginners (ages 5-6 years).
3. There are no offside rules enforced in ROM. In Alignment with US Youth Soccer and FL Youth Soccer, Offside for U10 has been eliminated. Most associations have eliminated offside for U12 games where the team size is 7v7 or less, like our Varsity Girls. Below are some resources on offsides for U10s/U12s.
	* + [https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0025/7438/socceru10recom mendations.pdf](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0025/7438/socceru10recommendations.pdf)
		+ <http://onthepitch.org/wp-content/uploads/u10no_offside.pdf>
		+ <https://yoursoccerhome.com/youth-soccer-rules-for-every-age-group/>
4. There is no slide tackling allowed in any age group. This means a player can slide to shoot, trap, or stop a ball when not near another player. No player may go to the ground in a way that can potentially impact another player’s safety on either team; the player sliding will be penalized. For example, a player may slide to save a ball from going out of bounds. It will be at the official's discretion if this is a dangerous play on a ball pursued by opposing players.
5. Yellow and Red cards will be issued as needed for the seven-year-old and older Rookie, Junior Varsity, and Varsity divisions. The first yellow card for a player will be treated as a caution. If the same player receives a second yellow card in the game, it is treated as a red card per regular soccer rules. If a red card is issued, the player penalized sits out the remainder of the game, and their team plays a man down. The red card does not carry over into the next game. Upon game completion, the official must report the red card to the ROM director or soccer commissioner.
6. Age grouping and team sizes will be based on the number of players and their ages. Ball Sizes, Game Durations, and Age-Specific Rules.
	1. 8v8 Co-Ed Varsity (ages 10-14), including the keeper– Size 5 soccer ball – Two 12-minute halves with a forced 1-minute water break at 8 minutes into each half at the referee’s stoppage of play and clock. There is a 5-minute halftime. Additionally, there is a mandatory substitution every four minutes.
	2. 8v8 Rookie Boys (ages 7-8), 7v7 Junior Varsity Boys (ages 9-10), and 8v8 JV Girls (ages 7-10), including the keeper – Size 4 soccer ball - Two 24-minute halves with a forced water break 12 minutes into each half, at the referee’s stoppage of play and clock. There is a 5-minute halftime. Following Soccer Academy Rules, a team adds a player if down by three goals; once the goal difference goes to 2, the extra player comes off the field. Additionally, there is a mandatory substitution every six minutes. Rookie Boys must have a minimum of seven players, JV Girls four players, and JV Boys six players or the result is a forfeiture, and teams can scrimmage with an official.
	3. 3v3 Beginners Co-Ed (ages 5-6), with no keepers – Size 3 ball – Two 18-minute halves broken into three 6-minute periods. There is a one-minute substitution and hydration break between periods. There is a 5-minute half-time. The following Beginner’s division rules of play are found at the bottom of these rules. There are no goalkeepers for this division.

1. Scores and league standings are kept in all leagues except Beginner Co-Ed (ages 5-6). If the regular season game ends in a tie, there will be no overtime, and the game will stay a tie. Overtime will be assessed only during tournament play. We will keep a tally of points during the season that will help determine the tournament positions at season’s end; the points are three (3) for a win, one (1) for a tie, and zero (0) for a loss.
2. During tournament play only, there will be two overtime periods if a game goes into overtime. Each overtime period will be 6 minutes with a 2-minute halftime, allowing for water, switching sides, and mandatory substitutions. A goal in overtime does not end the overtime period; in other words, there is no ‘Golden Goal.’ Should the other team score to tie the game before the overtime period ends, play continues until time runs out. After completing the two overtime periods, a draw results in a penalty kick shootout. The FIFA rules apply to this process. Only the players on the field at the end of the second overtime period can kick.
3. Substitution Rules- The referee will designate the substitution times every six minutes with an official stoppage of play. Note: no substitution can be made without the referee's consent.
	1. Substitutions must occur near the midfield line on the side of the teams. The players entering the game must wait for the departing players to be five to ten feet near the sideline before entering the field.
	2. Players cannot sit for consecutive six-minute periods. Each player must sit once during the game before any players sit a second time (and so forth). If there are enough subs, no player can sit three times before every player has sat twice. Similarly, a player cannot sit four times before every player has sat three times. This ensures that each team utilizes its bench as a part of the gameplay, allowing all players to get similar playing time.
	3. Each team will record their player’s sitting time per game. A small substitution sheet can be requested from the commissioner or from the shed. The official or ROMAC member may request it at any time. The penalty for not honoring this rule may result in forfeiture of the game where the violation occurred. Completed substitution forms can be turned in at the ROM shed.

1. Players not playing must stay in the designated bench area, and coaches must be within the designated coaching box and will not be permitted to roam about the sidelines.
2. The game clock, kept by the referee, is continuous. It will not be stopped for injuries, and time will not be made up at the end of the game. The referee will be the sole decision maker to decide if additional time needs to be added to a game during a stoppage. There is a limited time for each game during non-tournament game days.
3. Safety of our ROM Family
	1. If there is thunder or lightning, the players and coaches must clear the fields and head into a building or vehicle for a thirty-minute lightning-free period. If lightning happens again, then the thirty minutes restart. This may result in a canceled practice or game. The practice or game may resume after thirty minutes without lightning once the all-clear four blasts are sounded.
	2. Goals must have pegs in place for practices and games. The officials and coaches will ensure that goals are ready for games. Coaches will be responsible for the practices, setting up and returning goals and pegs to their designated places.
	3. Parents are required to sit on the opposite side of the field from the teams to ensure no interference with the coaches and the effectiveness of their coaching duties.

1. Safety of players:
	1. Equipment consists of a jersey, shorts, shin guards, socks, and shoes (cleats are highly suggested). When a player is on the field, shin guards must be worn (covered adequately with socks). If players have no shin guards, they cannot play. Articles that may constitute a danger to the wearer or any other player must be removed, i.e., jewelry, earrings, watches, barrettes, chains, belts, head coverings with any visor or protrusions, etc. If the official accepts, players may safely tape items that cannot be removed. Players tuck in shirts during the game.
	2. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players, from each other, and the referee.
	3. A goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed cap or soft headgear with the referee's approval.
	4. For the safety of others, players with plaster casts or rigid splints may not be permitted to play -- even with the permission of a parent or medical approval. Only with appropriate padding for the safety of the players can splints or casts possibly be permitted.

1. As previously noted, The FIFA Official Rules of the Game will be followed in all remaining cases. You can find these rules at: [http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/lawsofthegame/index.html.](http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/lawsofthegame/index.html)

## Beginners 3 v 3 Rules

**Number of Players:**

Six is the maximum number of players on a team: three players on the field and 2-3 substitutes. (A team must have a minimum of 3 field players.) There are no goalkeepers in Beginners 3v3.

**Goal Scoring:**

A goal may be scored from any location on the field. Goal kicks, kick-offs, and kick-ins are where the ball may be kicked into the goal. The player does not necessarily need to be on the offensive half to score, as was the rule in years past.

**Game Duration:**

The game shall consist of two 18-minute halves of six-minute periods separated by a one-minute water break. A coin toss will determine direction and possession before the start of the game. There are no timeouts, and the clock does not stop in 4v4 games.

The halftime is five minutes. The team that did not kick off initially will start with the kick-off in the second half.

**Substitution:**

Beginners will follow the same substitution rules as older divisions (See Rule #11 above).

This division allows substitutions during dead-ball situations, regardless of possession. Substitutions should not be made on the fly, except in the case of an injury.

**Kick-Off:**

Kick-offs may be taken in any direction.

**No Throw-Ins:**

Throw-ins will not be used in this division. The aim is to educate players on using their feet, as no goalies use their hands. Players will not throw the ball into play. There will need to be a five-yard minimum distance from the player kicking the ball into play from the sidelines, goal kicks, or corner kicks.

**Five Yard Rule:**

Defending players must stand at least five yards away from the ball in all dead-ball situations. If the defensive player’s goal is closer than five yards, the ball shall be played five yards from the goal box in line with the direction of play before the penalty.

**Direct & Indirect Kicks:**

All dead-ball kicks (goal kicks, kick-ins, kick-offs, free kicks) are direct and can be kicked in the goals.

**Goal Kicks:**

Goal Kicks may be taken from any point within two yards of the goal. Taking the goal kick from the goal line is not suggested, where the ball may be quickly kicked back into an undefended goal.