



North Reading Youth Soccer Advice to Referees

1. **Be punctual.** You should arrive at the field at least 15 minutes prior to scheduled kick-off so you have time to check the field and check players' equipment and still kick-off on time. Schedules are tight, please start and end matches on time.
2. **Look official.** Wear your referee jersey. Tuck the jersey in. Wear black shorts and socks and proper footwear. In cold weather, wear layers UNDER your jersey, and sweatpants/windpants (preferably black) over your shorts. Gloves and soft caps are allowed in cold weather. Leave your cell phone in your bag from beginning to end of the match.
3. **Bring your stuff.** In addition to proper uniform, make sure you have your WHISTLE, WATCH, PENCIL/PEN, GAME SLIPS and a water bottle and snacks BEFORE you leave home.
4. **Use your help.** Experienced referees, coaches and NRYS officials will be the fields. They are there to help and support you. Ask questions and listen to their advice. Ask them for feedback and suggestions at half time and at the end of the match.
5. **Introduce yourself to the coaches.** Keep your head up, look them in the eye when you say Hi. Do not mumble or stare at the ground.
6. **Know the rules.** Make sure you know time, duration, restarts and other special rules for each NRYS age group as well as the "Laws of the Game". Take a few minutes to re-read them during the season; do not wait until you are in the car on the way to your match.
7. **Practice using your whistle and hand signals** at home before your match. Don't wait until you have to make your first call on the field. Blowing your whistle loudly, appropriately and confidently and making the right signal will make your job much easier. For U7, you should blow the whistle for EVERY out of bounds and stoppage. For U8 and U9, use it only when necessary or required by the Laws of the Game.
8. **Try to relax and have fun.** You will make mistakes, just like players and coaches will. Every game is a new learning experience for everyone. If you realize you made a mistake, admit and change your call to the correct one if the game hasn't restarted yet.
9. **Show effort.** Being in the correct position will allow you to make the right calls, and will give coaches and spectators confidence in your calls.
10. **Call what you see,** but do not guess or assume anything if you didn't see it. Even if the coach, player or spectator tells you about it.
11. **If you have a problem** with a spectator or coach, ask the other coaches or the mentor to help. NRYS has very strict policies about coach and spectator behavior toward referees. If you feel intimidated and uncomfortable, it is OK to leave the match and let the coaches handle refereeing. Any incidents must be reported to a NRYS director. They will support you all the way.
12. Remember the 3 most important things about refereeing, **SAFE-FAIR-FUN**, and you will do a great job.