



Laws of the Game
Hamilton Girls Soccer
A Division



1. **Law - 1: Field of play.** Grass [mostly]. Dimensions may vary; however, fields are assigned by League and are the fields that must be used for all League games. Goals with nets are to be used.
2. **Law - 2: The Ball.** Senior and A division uses a size 5 soccer ball. Balls should be properly inflated is to be used [firm to the touch or approximately 8.5 lbs/sq. in.].
3. **Law - 3: The Number of Players.**
 - a. Normal game play is 11 v. 11 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. Games can be played with a minimum of 7 players on a team.
 - b. Given the level of play, it is requested that teams should accommodate teams that may have fewer than 11 by reducing your players to correspond with the team with fewer players [i.e. try to avoid 11 v. 7 please].
 - c. Player substitutions may occur when play is stopped for: either team's throw-in; goals; any team's goal kicks; injuries; and misconduct. Subbing is mandatory by a team if one of its players receives a yellow card. The player issued a yellow card must be subbed out for 10 minutes. All players entering the field during a substitution must line up at the center line and wait for the referee to signal them onto the field.
4. **Law - 4: The Player's Equipment.**
 - a. All Players on the same team are to wear the same color shirts except the Goalie of the respective team. The Goalie is to wear a different color than the respective teammates.
 - b. Shin guards are to be worn and must be covered entirely by soccer sock.
 - c. No jewelry of any kind can be worn [earrings that are "covered" are NOT permitted]. If a Referee observes this after a match has started, they may stop the game and order the player to leave the game [the player may return once the jewelry is removed and there is a stoppage of play].
 - d. Visors, hairpins, or any other hard items are not permitted.
 - e. Proper soccer foot apparel is to be worn. No metal spikes or metal cleats. Sneakers or similar athletic shoes are acceptable as long as no danger is posed to the players.
5. **Law - 5: The Referee.**
 - a. The Referee's call is final.
 - b. The Referee maintains the time for the game.
 - c. Only the Referee can stop the game.
 - d. Only the Referee may call a foul or misconduct.



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- e. Coaches and spectators shall not harass the Referee(s) before, during, or after a game. The referees are advised to report these violations. Please remember that this is a kid's game, played by kids, and refereed at times by kids.
- f. Referees may suspend or terminate a match for weather, improper playing conditions, persistent fouling, misconduct, unsportsmanship, or outside interference.

6. Law - 6: ~~The Assistant Referee.~~

~~At this level, there usually will not be an Assistant Referee; however, each team is encouraged to supply a flag person to facilitate the Referee calling a game stoppage and possession when the ball has left the field of play [i.e. outside the touchline].~~

7. Law – 7: The Duration of the Match.

- a. There shall be 2 halves of play at 35 minutes each for a total of 70 minutes of playing time.
- b. The game clock is to be stopped at the end of quarters and may be stopped during a prolonged game stoppage due to player injury.
- c. There shall be a 5-minute stoppage between halves.
- d. Teams shall change sides after halftime.
- e. Inclement weather: Games may be called off before or during the match if rain (or snow) causes the field to be unplayable or dangerous. If there is a presence of lightning or thunder, regardless of rain, the game shall be terminated. These conditions can be discussed and decided by the Referee and coaches involved. The Division Director will attempt to contact the coaches one-hour before the game is scheduled to begin to cancel. If the Division Director does not cancel the game, you should report to the field ready to play. If the field conditions are that bad, it is up to the referee to call the game. If no referees are there, it is up to both coaches to decide whether to play or not. If a game on your field is canceled due to inclement weather or field conditions, all games on that field are canceled. Please call the subsequent coaches and the Division Director to let them know

8. Law – 8: The Start and Restart of Play.

- a. Kick-off - start of the game, new quarter, or after a goal is scored commences once the Offensive Team, at midfield, places the ball in forward motion. The Defensive Team shall be at least 10 yards away on their half of the field.
- b. At the discretion of the Referee, the start of the match [first halve] may commence in one of 2 ways: 1) by coin toss in which the winner of the coin toss selects which goal they are to defend [not which direction they are kicking]; the other



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team then kicks off first. OR 2) the Home Team selects which goal they will defend and the Visiting Team kicks off first.

- c. Dropped Ball is a way to restart play if a stoppage of play occurs that is for any other reason not specifically mentioned in the Laws (i.e. out of bounds, goal, or end of half / game).

9. Law - 9: The Ball In and Out of Play.

The ball is out of play when it has COMPLETELY crossed the touchline [sidelines] or goal line either on the ground or in the air.

10. Law - 10: Scoring.

- a. A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses the goal line between the goal crossbars and if no foul or other infraction had occurred.
- b. Runaway games are no fun for anyone. A runaway game is defined as a greater than 5 goal differential. Please make the necessary moves to make the game more enjoyable for everyone. Suggestions include pulling the ball backward or sideward and working on passing and ball control.
- c. At the end of regulation time, if both teams have the same amount of goals, the game shall remain as a tie; there are no "golden goal" time periods (sudden death).

11. Law – 11: Offside.

- a. Offside is called at this level (Recreational A-Division).
- b. It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position.
- c. A player is in an offside position if:
 - she is nearer to her opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.
- d. A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, she is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by:
 - interfering with play, or
 - interfering with an opponent, or
 - gaining an advantage by being in that position.
- e. A player is not in an offside position if:
 - she is in her own half of the field of play, or
 - she is level with the second last opponent, or
 - she is level with the last two opponents.
- f. There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in, or a corner kick.
- g.

12. Law - 12: Fouls and Misconducts.



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- a. There can be Warnings (yellow cards) or Send Offs (red cards) called for Fouls or Misconducts at this level (Recreational A-Division); however, most fouls or misconducts will be called as outlined below. Any player actually receiving a red card will serve a one game suspension at a minimum (misses the next game). This may require a hearing to be conducted (between the executive board, referee and respective coaches) to discuss the severity of the incident.
- b. Fouls are infractions that are committed by a Player during the game, while inplay, AND on the field of play. Misconducts are infractions that are committed by a Player before or after the game OR during the game while off the field of play OR by a Player not actively playing.
- c. Any foul occurring (i.e. tripping, pushing, charging, or other non-incident rough contact without making contact with the ball first) shall result in a direct kick by the team that is the recipient of the foul. This shall be handled in the same manner as a handball. Continuous foul play by the same player may result in the referee asking the player to leave the playing field for the duration of the half.
- d. There shall be handballs called resulting in a change of possession at the point of infraction. In the event of a handball occurring in the penalty area (within the 18yard line) by the defensive team, a penalty kick will be awarded.
- e. After controlling the ball with their hands, goalkeepers should take no more than six seconds to release the ball from their possession.
- f. The players (and coaches) shall exhibit good sportsmanship behavior at all times before, during, and after a game (especially during the post-game handshake).
- g. The league has taken a zero tolerance approach as to the behavior of coaches. A yellow card issued to a coach will result in a one game suspension and a hearing before the executive board. A red card (or 2 yellow cards) will result in suspension for the remainder of the season.

13. Law - 13: Free Kicks.

- a. Free kicks are either direct or indirect.
- b. For both direct and indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- c. All opponents are to be at least 10 yards away from kicker.
- d. If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal kick is awarded to the opposing team. No Goal.
- e. If an indirect or direct free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team. No Goal.
- f. The free kick (direct or indirect) is taken at the place where the infringement occurred if outside the penalty area. For free kicks inside the penalty area by the defending team, all opponents must remain outside of the penalty area until the ball is in play (kicked outside the penalty area). Indirect free kicks awarded to the



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attacking team inside the penalty area will be taken where the infringement occurred unless awarded inside the goal area. If awarded inside the goal area, the indirect free kick will be taken on the goal area line which runs parallel to the goal line, at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

14. Law – 14: Penalty Kicks.

A penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits one of the ten offenses for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play. Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each half.

15. Law – 15: Throw-in.

- a. Foul throw-ins are called at this level.
- b. To result in a proper throw-in, at the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:
 - face the field of play
 - have part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
 - use both hands
 - deliver the ball from behind and over her head.
- c. Infractions resulting in an incorrect throw-in will result in a change of possession.

16. Law – 16: Goal Kick.

- a. By the defensive team may be taken from any position within the goal area box. The ball must completely travel beyond the penalty area (18-yard line) before any player may touch the ball.
- b. If the ball has not gone completely across the 18-yard line before a player touches the ball, the goal kick shall be retaken.
- c. In the event the defensive player taking the goal kick is not capable of kicking the ball beyond the 18 yard line (1 or 2 attempts must be taken first), the ball may be positioned approximately 5 yards outside of the goal box to increase the chance of the ball traveling across the 18 yard line. If after this, the ball still cannot be kicked beyond the 18-yard line, another defensive player shall take the kick.

17. Law – 17: Corner Kick.

- a. The ball is in play once the ball is placed into motion.



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- b. Opponents (defensive team) shall be at least 10 yards away from the kicker.
- c. If the kicker touches the ball before the ball is touched by another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.
- d. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

The rules outlined above are consistent with FIFA “Laws of the Game” summarized and adjusted for the recreational level of play. It is recommended that every coach review in its entirety the FIFA “Laws of the Game” which can be obtained on the Internet at **www.fifa.com**.

Any questions or interpretations of the Laws are to be addressed with the Division Director.