

## Rules Applicable to U8 (1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade) Games

1. **GAME SPECIFICS** - The ball shall be size 3. There shall be six (6) players (7 players is acceptable during seasons with large rosters and 5 players is acceptable during seasons with small rosters and both coaches and referees agree), one of whom shall be a goalkeeper. There is a minimum of 4 players required per game. There is a 10-minute delay if a team does not meet this minimum and then a forfeit will be awarded. The minute that the minimum number of players is there, the game should start. If a game starts late, the referee shall shorten the game to stay on time. The game will consist of four, 8-minute quarters. There are 2 minute breaks after the first and third quarters, and a five-minute halftime break.
  - a. The basic compulsory equipment of a player is a jersey or shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards, and footwear. Compulsory shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks. Shin guards must be made of a suitable material and sized to provide a reasonable degree of protection.
  - b. A coin flip will determine which team gets to choose the end of the field that they would like to defend and the other team gets to kick off.
  - c. Each player must play in at least 50% of the game.
  - d. Players are to be rotated during the game, so that a player does not play the same position on the field all game. The intent is to develop all skills, not specialize in one position.
  - e. One coach from each team may be on the field during the game, if they believe it necessary. The preference is for the coaches to remain on their sideline. If a coach chooses to be on the field they may not interfere with the game or the referee.
2. **JEWELRY** - Coaches are responsible for making sure that players remove all jewelry, watches, rings, earrings, bracelets, hard barrettes and any other items the referee deems improper. This requirement is to avoid injury to the player wearing the jewelry and the other players.
3. **SUBSTITUTIONS** - Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee and the players should be positioned at midfield while waiting to be waived on:
  - a. Prior to a throw-in, in your favor;
  - b. Prior to a goal kick, by either team;
  - c. After a goal, by either team;
  - d. After an injury, when the referee stops play, by either team;
    - i. Any player suspected of suffering a head injury must be substituted for evaluation;
  - e. At half-time;
  - f. When the referee stops play to caution player, only the cautioned player may be substituted, prior to the restart of the game.
4. **FREE KICKS** – USSF rules apply. No penalty kicks.
5. **OFFSIDES** – USSF rules apply. No offside rule at this level.
6. **SLIDE TACKLING** – no slide tackling allowed.
7. **HEADING** – USSF rules apply. No heading allowed; when a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick

should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

8. **THROW-INS** – USSF rules, except re-throws are allowed to encourage proper technique.
9. **HELP THE KIDS** - The referees are encouraged to explain the infraction.
10. **LOCATION OF SPECTATORS**: Spectators are to be on one side of the field and both coaches and their players on the other (unless there is no free side in which case, the coach and spectators from each team will share one half of the pitch). No one may stand behind the goal line. All spectators must stand back at least 3 feet from the sideline.
11. **IMBALANCED GAMES** – The referee is not required to enforce this rule. However, if the referee is aware of the rule and can point it out to the teams, it is intended to promote good sportsmanship. The rule provides that if one team is ahead by 4 goals, the winning team is required to take action to prevent the running up of the score and to make it a more fun game for the other team. This can mean pulling players, moving aggressive players to defense or other steps to even the game. Telling a player not to score or playing keep away does not meet this requirement. If the losing team has enough players, they may be allowed to add a player.
12. **BAD WEATHER POLICY** – NAYSL follows the bad weather policy of OSYSA. The policy is posted on the parks web site soccer page [www.naparks.org](http://www.naparks.org). The referee is responsible for determining whether a game will be played, delayed or cancelled. The referees at the fields make this determination at game time. There is no telephone person or number to check on the status of the game before game time. Coaches and players need to show up for all scheduled games regardless of the weather. Remember, it's the weather at the fields, not in your neighborhood that determines whether a game is played or not. Soccer is played in bad weather conditions, as long as the weather does not pose a danger.