
Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

Laws of the Game

- 1) Laws of the Game - Play will be governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game, except for following modifications.
- 2) Sportsmanship - Any player who is ordered off the field due to receiving a Red Card cannot be replaced. A player who gets a yellow card can be replaced and must sit out for at least 5 minutes for a cooling off period, (Longer if necessary at the discretion of the Head Coach).
- 3) A player or coach receiving a red card must leave the field and will be suspended from the next game. A player or coach involved in a fight will be suspended for the remainder of the current season and may not be allowed to participate for 12 consecutive months.
- 4) Each player present shall play a minimum of one half of the game, barring injury or unless limited by a medical, physical problem or other unforeseen circumstances.
- 5) Completing one half will be declared an official game.
- 6) Shin guards MUST be worn in all divisions. Shoes with metal cleats are not permitted. Football cleats are allowable if the "toe cleat" is removed
- 7) ALL PLAYERS & COACHES will line up and courteously shake hands at the end of the game. Failing to shake hands in a gracious and courteous manner may result in a red card. Revised 1/31/19
- 8) Coaches—coach, Referees—referee, Parents—cheer. Stick to YOUR role.
- 9) All jewelry, including earrings, watches, necklaces, and barrettes must be removed. If after applying tape over non-removable earrings the referee is allowed to use their discretion as to whether the tape provides adequate safety for the wearer and other players.
- 10) No one but players and officials should ever be on the field unless invited by the official or coach due to an injury.
- 11) If you are unhappy with the calls that an official makes, do not speak at, nor speak to the Officials. Do not make loud comments nor complain about the officiating. Officials will miss calls just like players will miss shots or make bad passes. Everyone makes mistakes. Instead of complaining, a person's time & energy may be better spent helping others to adjust and cope with the situation.
- 12) Referees are in charge from the time they arrive until the time they depart the field of play. Referee decisions cannot be appealed.
- 13) Only the head coach is permitted to address the referee.
- 14) Parents& Spectators - Parents and spectators should occupy the opposite side of the field and also remain between the penalty box lines. Spectators, players, and coaches are not permitted behind the goal lines or inside the penalty box lines

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

- during play. All players, coaches, and spectators must remain a minimum of 3 feet away from the sideline to allow the players and referees room to see and maneuver.
- 15) Scheduled start times: Games will not begin earlier than the scheduled start time, unless both coaches agree to start earlier. In the case where an earlier game runs over, then the following game will start within 3 to 5 minutes immediately after the proceeding game ends. Therefore, teams should arrive ahead of the scheduled start time to warm up and be ready to play. No grace period will be allowed to wait for players or coaches to arrive after the scheduled start time.
 - 16) Players may protect their chest and groin areas with their arms as long as their arms are in contact with the body at the time contact is made. Casts and braces are allowed if they are well padded and are not used in a dangerous manner and are only allowed at the referee's discretion.
 - 17) Substitutions are permitted by either team after a goal is scored, on goal kicks, and by the team controlling the ball on throw-ins. Substitutions are not permitted by either team on corner kicks. An injured player may be substituted for at any time. Substituted players may return to the game.
 - 18) Legal Players: A legal player is simple to identify as each coach has a player roster that has the contact info for each player on their team. Only players listed on the team's roster are allowed to play.
 - 19) Player Shortage: There will be times when one or both teams have small rosters or are shorthanded. In the interests of good sportsmanship, the team with more players will play with fewer players on the field to match the opposing team's numbers. Further, if this process leaves the larger team with too many players on the sidelines, the larger team shall "loan" players to the shorthanded team to allow as many to play as possible. Sometimes coaches do not like to "loan" players so Coaches may borrow **legal players** from other teams (players may play up but not play down) and may only borrow or use a maximum of three (3) players for a game. This should only be done if a team is going to be short players for a game. If a team needs more than three (3) borrowed players from another team they must first get approval from the Recreation Specialist by 12 noon the day before the game. It does not matter if a team with borrowed players has more players than the team they are playing.
 - 20) Disparity in Scoring- Lopsided games: Teams rarely benefit when getting blown out of a game, nor when they're blowing out their opponent. Anytime that a team is up

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

by 4 or more goals then that team will play down a player until the differential in the score is less than 4 goals. This applies to all age groups.

DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

U6

- a. Do not keep score. Scoring is wonderful, but keeping score at this early stage is of little value for these players. However, they do highly value the cheers of support and encouragement.
- b. Goal Keepers are not allowed - Do not put nor allow anyone to appear as “guarding the goal”. *It is already hard enough for them to get the ball in the net. We want them to score and to score often, as that tends to build on their level of enthusiasm as well as to give them a small break in the action. Also, remember that the number of goals that they score is not important. What is of the utmost importance is that they want to try to score and then if they do they will be rewarded with a sense of accomplishment and that is something that is best earned.*
- c. Ghost Goalie - You should have been given an extra jersey that is to be hung on the goal that your team is defending. This will help the players to know which goal they should be scoring in.
- d. Coaches on the field. Each team can have up to two coaches on the field with the players. This is done so as to minimize stress that can come from a coach being on the side line and then having to yell at the players on the field. Being on the field allows the coach to be able to converse with the players as opposed to having to shout from afar. The coaches are also the referees and need to make calls as well as explain infractions.
- e. Throw-ins – We don't insist that this age group start working on throw-ins with the players until the U8 division. It's left to the discretion of the coaches as to whether they should begin teaching throw-ins to the young players in the U6 division. This partly due to not wanting young players to learn bad habits. The coaches should do the throw-ins for their respective team and be careful to always use the correct technique as the players will learn based on how they see it being done.
- f. Many Years ago the Recreation Dept went along with the consensus on ways to reduce confusion and adopted a simple “hands-off “philosophy. The consensus was that U6 players should be given a simple instruction, along the lines of <Once they step foot on the soccer field, they are to never, never let their hands

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

touch the ball, but always use their feet>. The intent is to help avoid the instinctive nature of wanting to pick up the ball. Only a Goalie can use their hands to pick up a soccer ball, but remember that goalies aren't allowed in the U6 division. The logic behind this is merely to reduce confusion and to focus on the feet. When the players move to the next age group they will learn about the goalie position.

- g. No penalty kicks
- h. A second try will be given if a throw-in foul is committed on the first try, after the 2nd attempt the possession of the ball goes to the other team at the same place.
- i. No off sides
- j. No slide tackles or heading the ball
- k. 2 Coaches allowed on the field to give verbal instruction and encourage, but should not interfere with the game.
- l. If players get "bunched up" stop play & award one team a free kick. (Not right in front of the goal)
- m. Do not forget that you may also need to give some gentle coaching to any over excited spectators and/or coaches.
- n. A coach or parent volunteer with a cell phone needs to be found who will track the time. In U6 soccer, it is very easy to track as once the clock starts it is not stopped. They will only need to let the coaches know when the 8 minutes is up. U6 coaches can play 6, 8, 10 or even 12 minute quarters if desired. The only time factor that must be maintained is to be off the field in ample time so that the next scheduled game can start at the scheduled time.

U8

- a. No score is kept
- b. Referees explain infractions
- c. Keepers must be changed each quarter
- d. No offsides
- e. No penalty kicks
- f. All free kicks are indirect
- g. Second try is allowed on a throw-in. After the second attempt, the opposing team takes possession at the same spot.
- h. No slide tackles
- i. 2 coaches allowed on the field, but may not interfere with the game.
- j. A coach should sub for any unsportsmanlike behavior and the official may require it.

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

- k. A un-sportsman like coach will be asked to leave the field & suspended for a game.

U8 - U10 - U12 Division

- 1) **Goalkeeper Punts:** There will be no punts made by the goalkeeper. Goalkeepers will only be able to throw the ball or place it on the ground and kick it. When placed on the ground, the ball cannot be moving. No drop kicks allowed. This is a result of playing on smaller field sizes and is intended for "fair play" and to promote playing out of the back. If the keeper forgets and punts the ball, then possession will be given to the other team at midfield, unless it is the first time. Then the referee is to stop play and restart at the spot on the ground where the keeper punted it originally. Additionally, the goalkeeper has the option of waiting for the opponents to get back, but the goalkeeper does not have to wait to play the ball out. There is no consequence to any player if the ball is lost after it is played in. This also applies to goal kicks and any other free kicks inside of the penalty box regardless of the player that takes the kick.

U10 - U12 – U15 - U18

- A. No Score is kept
- B. Referees explain infractions for the 1st two games
- C. No Limited Play Time for Goalies

SOCCER RULES & TERMS

Captains- The Laws of the Game state that the captain has 'a degree of responsibility for the behavior of their team' - captains are expected to use this responsibility to help calm/positively influence the behavior of their players, especially in controversial/confrontational situations involving opponents or match officials Respect for Referees.

Start of play: Choice of end and possession is decided by a coin toss. Captains meet with the referee (or coaches in the younger groups)

Goalkeeper: May pick up the ball with his/her hands. Within the penalty box.

Must have a different color shirt.

Must either throw or kick the ball to his/her teammates.

His/her teammates may not kick the ball back to the keeper

Keeper has about 6 seconds to put the ball back in play

Ball in & out of play:

The ball is out of play when:

- It is completely over the side or end line
- The referee has stopped the game.

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

The ball is in play when:

- It bounces off the goal, corner flag or the referee.

Goal: A goal is scored when the ball is completely over the goal line between the goalposts.

Fouls: Push, trip, intentionally handling the ball to gain advantage.

Free kicks: Awarded to a player after a foul. Direct kick—may be kicked into the goal

Offsides: A player can be in an off sides position but that does not actually mean that the player is offsides. Here is a brief explanation of determining when a player is off sides:

- Off sides cannot occur during a throw-in
- Off sides cannot occur if a defender kicks the ball to their own goalie.

Offside will be called: If a player is on the attacking/offensive side of the field and they are ahead of all defending players (except the second to last defender) at the moment that the ball was kicked and the head referee thinks that the offensive player is seeking to gain and advantage.

- An offensive player must be deemed by the head official to actually be in a position to be a part of the play to be called off sides. Simply being in an off sides position does not constitute being called for off sides.
- In an Offside Penalty, the ball is placed where the offense took place. IE, where the player actually played the ball, NOT where the 2nd to last defender was standing.

Penalty kicks: For an infraction within the penalty box. Attacking team gets the ball on the penalty mark. One player kicks at the goal. Keeper is in the goal. All other players must be outside the box & circle until the ball kicked out of the penalty box.

Throw in: When the ball completely crosses the sideline, a throw-in is awarded to the team who did not touch it last. It is thrown from the point where it crossed the line.

The thrower, at the moment of delivery of the ball:

1. Must face the field of play
2. Part of each foot must be on the ground either on or behind the sideline
3. Both hands must be used; the ball must be delivered from behind and over the head.
4. Play begins when the ball enters the field of play. The thrower cannot play it until it has touched by another player.
5. A goal cannot be scored from a throw in.

Goal kick: Taken by the defending team after the attacking team puts the ball over the endline. The ball is placed within the goal box. Opponents must be outside the penalty box. The team taking the kick may touch the ball before it leaves the penalty area.

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

Corner kick: Will be taken by the attacking team when the defenders put the ball over the end line. The ball is placed within the corner arc. A goal may be scored directly from this kick.

At kick-off: The ball can be kicked in any direction, including backwards.

Indirect free kick: Another player must touch the ball before it goes into the goal to score. On Indirect free kicks and corner kicks, the ball must clearly move. Having a player run and tap the top of the ball will no longer be accepted.

Direct free kick: The ball may go straight into the goal resulting in a scored point.

Handball: For the purposes of determining handball offences, the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit. Not every touch of a player's hand/arm with the ball is an offence. It is considered an offence when the player:

- Deliberately touches the ball with their hand/arm, for example moving the hand/arm towards the ball.
- Touches the ball with their hand/arm when it has made their body unnaturally bigger.

Rules for the Amherst Recreation Soccer Program

AMHERST COUNTY RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT ADDITIONAL LOCAL RULES GOVERNING SOCCER

Age Division	U6	U8	U10	U12	U15/U18
Number of players on Field	Typically 4v4-6v6	7v7-9v9	7v7-9v9	9v9-10v10	9v9-11v11
Roster Number	Teams of 8	Teams of 10-12	Teams of 10-12	Teams of 11-13	Teams of 12-15
Can the # of players be altered?	Yes, if both head coaches agree	Yes, if both head coaches agree	Yes, if both head coaches agree	Yes, if both head coaches agree	Yes, if both head coaches agree
Coaches Allowed on field	2 coaches per team are allowed during the game	2 coaches per team are allowed during the game	Not during game	Not during game	Not during game
Fouls added	n/a	n/a	Per Fifa	Per Fifa	Per Fifa
Off-sides- <i>cannot be altered</i>	Not enforced	Not enforced	Enforced	Enforced	Enforced
Game Length (minutes) 2 minutes allowed between quarters & 5 minutes between halves	Four 8 minute quarters	Four 8-minute quarters.	Four 10-minute quarters.	Four 12-minute quarters	24 min. halves U15 35min. halves U18
Heading - <i>cannot be altered</i>	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Goalkeeper can Punt - <i>cannot be altered</i>	Teams <u>NOT</u> allowed to have a Goal Keeper	No	No	No	Yes
Time limits for Goalie	Not needed	Can only play one Qtr	No restrictions	No restrictions	No restrictions
Slide Tackles - <i>cannot be altered</i>	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed