



U-12 Guidelines

AYSO's **Vision** is to provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

AYSO's **Mission** is to develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on AYSO's Six Philosophies:

- Everyone Plays®
- Balanced Teams
- Open Registration
- Positive Coaching
- Good Sportsmanship
- Player Development

Introduction

The objective of this program is to provide young players and their parents with an opportunity to refine their abilities and continue to explore the beautiful and simple game of soccer.

At this age coaches are beginning to work on team strategy as well as individual skills.

Practice time is designed for the coaches to play games with the kids that will teach them the fundamentals of soccer.

The Saturday game is designed to allow players to discover the game for themselves.

9 v 9 Game Set-Up and Guidelines

- Coaches should meet each other on the field with the referee before the game. Both coaches should demonstrate teamwork by communicating and working with each other to ensure that both teams are having fun.
- Each team will have eight players on the field at a time plus one goalkeeper.
- Teams will play four fifteen minute quarters. Substitutions may only occur at the break.
- The quarter breaks should only take as long as it takes to get a drink and to get the substitutes onto the field. (Two minutes maximum)
- The half time break is 5 minutes.
- A minimum of 2 quarters is required for each player and it is recommended that no one play 4 quarters until everyone has played 3 quarters.
- The mercy rule is a goal differential of seven. Try not to reach that. Coaches are there to ensure that both teams are learning and enjoying the game. If you have to mix up the teams to do that, than do it.

During the game, the job of the coach is just to keep the game going. Encourage the positive things and try to limit the directions. Most of the coaching should be done at practice; the game is where the players discover what they can do. We want them to be creative and independent players.

All other parents should be encouraged to cheer positively and refrain from "coaching" (giving directions) from the sideline. This is the time for the kids to play – LET THEM!

Player Equipment:

Shoes and shinguards, covered by the socks are mandatory at all practice and game activities. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes, or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.

The Start of Play:

To start the first and second halves, and following each goal in all age group games, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and the other team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the team scored upon kicks off.

The Kick-off:

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half and the team not kicking off at least 10 yards from the ball.

Ball In and Out of Play:

The ball is out of play in all age group games when it completely crosses the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line) either on the ground or in the air. The official will determine when the ball is in and out of play.

Throw in:

When the ball goes out of play across the touch line (side lines) a throw in is awarded at the point it crossed the line. The throw in is awarded to the team that didn't touch the ball last. If the throw in is taken improperly then the other team gets to take the throw in. Work on that at practice. Keep the game moving and fun.

Method of Scoring:

A goal in all age group games is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals should be enthusiastically celebrated.

Fouls and Other Stoppages:

The official is responsible for calling all fouls. Teach the players to respect his/her ability to call the game. All others should attempt to refrain from voicing their opinion. Kids have no problem learning to question authority when they are teens, we do not need to demonstrate it to them at this age.

Yellow or red cards may be given.

Penalty kicks may be awarded.

Offsides

'Offsides' will be enforced at this level. If you want to improve your understanding of the rule there are several visual explanations that you can find online. We have links to those on our website. (ayso-soccer.com) Unfortunately, the easiest way for the kids to learn 'offsides' is to be caught. Use the opportunity to teach.

Ball

At this age we use a size four ball for all games.