

# Skagit Valley Youth Soccer Association

## Basic Rule Variations, Recreational (2025)

### by Age Group

**NOTE:** This chart only covers rules that differ from those published in IFAB Laws of the Game (FIFA). It is recommended that you also consult: [www.theifab.com](http://www.theifab.com) to view the complete Laws of the Game.

|                                              | <u>U-6/7</u>               | <u>U-08</u>                | <u>U-09</u>                | <u>U-10</u>                | <u>U-11</u>                         | <u>U-12</u>                         | <u>U-13/14</u>                       | <u>U-15/16</u>                       | <u>U-17/18</u>                       |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Match Duration</b>                        | 4 x 8 Min./<br>4 x 10 Min. | 2 x 25 Min.                | 2 x 25 Min.                | 2 x 25 Min                 | 2 x 30 Min.                         | 2 x 30 Min.                         | 2 x 35 Min.                          | 2 x 40 Min.                          | 2 x 45 Min.                          |
| <b>Ball Size</b>                             | 3                          | 3                          | 4                          | 4                          | 4                                   | 4                                   | 5                                    | 5                                    | 5                                    |
| <b>Goalkeeper</b>                            | No                         | Yes                        | Yes                        | Yes                        | Yes                                 | Yes                                 | Yes                                  | Yes                                  | Yes                                  |
| <b>Total # of Field Players (see note 4)</b> | 3<br>(no minimum enforced) | 4<br>(no minimum enforced) | 7<br>(no minimum enforced) | 7<br>(no minimum enforced) | 9<br>(must have at least 6 to play) | 9<br>(must have at least 6 to play) | 11<br>(must have at least 7 to play) | 11<br>(must have at least 7 to play) | 11<br>(must have at least 7 to play) |
| <b>Incorrect throw-in</b>                    | Retake (see note 1)        | Retake (see note 1)        | Per FIFA                   | Per FIFA                   | Per FIFA                            | Per FIFA                            | Per FIFA                             | Per FIFA                             | Per FIFA                             |
| <b>Free Kicks</b>                            | IFK only (see note 3)      | IFK only (see note 3)      | Per FIFA (PK @ 10 yds)     | Per FIFA (PK @ 10 yds)     | Per FIFA (PK @ 10 yds)              | Per FIFA (PK @ 10 yds)              | Per FIFA                             | Per FIFA                             | Per FIFA                             |
| <b>Build-out line used (see note 6)</b>      | Yes (uses half line)       | Yes (uses half line)       | Yes (painted)              | Yes (painted)              | Yes (painted)                       | No                                  | No                                   | No                                   | No                                   |
| <b>Goalkeeper Punting (see note 5)</b>       | N/A                        | Not Allowed                | Not Allowed                | Not Allowed                | Not Allowed                         | Yes                                 | Yes                                  | Yes                                  | Yes                                  |
| <b>Heading Allowed (see note 7)</b>          | No                         | No                         | No                         | No                         | No                                  | No                                  | Yes                                  | Yes                                  | Yes                                  |
| <b>Offside enforced</b>                      | No                         | No                         | Yes (see note 2 & 2a)      | Yes (see note 2 & 2a)      | Yes (see note 2a)                   | Yes                                 | Yes                                  | Yes                                  | Yes                                  |
| <b>Slide Tackle</b>                          | NOT Allowed                | NOT Allowed                | NOT Allowed                | NOT Allowed                | Allowed                             | Allowed                             | Allowed                              | Allowed                              | Allowed                              |

**Note 1:** In addition to allowing the player to retake the throw, please instruct player as to their mistake. At U-08 and below, allow 1 retake. Play on after that, even if still incorrect. We don't want half of the match taken up with throw-ins. Since incorrect throw-ins do not result in a change of possession at this level, it is acceptable for a coach and/or referee to give instructions/reminders to players prior to the throw if it will help teach the player and keep the game flowing.

**Note 2:** Offside will be enforced for U-9 and U-10. However, coaches and parents are expected to understand that it is normally the job of Assistant Referees to watch for this. We do not assign Assistant Referees to these matches. Therefore, it is possible that a referee may not be in position to see a "close" offside call. The referee will use their best judgment and their decisions will be final. Coaches and parents will **NOT** argue offside calls (or lack of). For those coaches who may be more familiar with soccer "tactics"; you are not to be trying to coach "offside trap" at these levels.

**Note 2a:** Offside will only be enforced between the goal line and the build-out line. Offside will not be enforced between the build-out line and the halfway line.

**Note 3:** No free kicks for the attacking team will be taken within the penalty area (no penalty kicks). If an offense occurs within the penalty area that results in a free kick for the attacking team, the ball will be placed at the nearest point immediately outside of the penalty area. The IFK will be taken from that point.

**Note 4:** The total number of players on the field shall include the goalkeeper, when a goalkeeper is used (U-8 and older).

**Note 5:** Where indicated, goalkeepers are not allowed to punt the ball. They must pass, throw, or roll the ball. A violation of this rule shall result in an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) being awarded to the opponent.

**Note 6:** Build-out lines: The build out line is used to promote playing the ball out of the back in an unpressed setting. When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line. At any time the goalkeeper may pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate, but the goalkeeper does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes. After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can then cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.

**Clarifications:**

- The ball shall be considered “put into play” when it is in play, per FIFA Laws of the Game.
- In the case of a goal kick, there is no requirement that the goalkeeper take the kick. For the purposes of this rule, the term “goalkeeper” will also apply to any player taking a goal kick.
- A goalkeeper is not required to wait for all opponents to retreat behind the build-out line before putting the ball in play. However, if a goalkeeper chooses to put the ball in play before all opponents have retreated behind the build-out line, he/she accepts the risk/consequences of the ball being intercepted by those opponents.
- A goalkeeper who is waiting for opponents to retreat behind the build-out line shall not be penalized for controlling the ball with their hands for more than 6 seconds.

**Note 7:** Per USSF Player Development Initiative: Deliberate heading of the ball will not be allowed at U-12 and below. If a player, at U-11 and below, deliberately heads the ball in a game, the Referee shall stop play and award an IFK to the opposing team at the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the IFK should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the offense occurred.

**Misconduct For Recreational Matches:**

**Coaches/team staff** - Referees are instructed that, in the event of a Warning or Expulsion being issued to a team staff member (Head Coach, Asst. Coaches, etc.), the appropriate card will be displayed to the offending staff member (Yellow = Warning, Red = Expulsion). The Referee will contact the Referee Assignor for coach or parent problems. If there is a problem with a parent/spectator, the referee should not engage the problem person. The referee should bring the problem to the attention of the team coach.

**Players - For U-11 and above:** Normal FIFA guidelines/procedures will be followed and the Referee will file a misconduct report via the SVSRA (Referee) website.

**For U-10 and below:** The Referee will not issue or present yellow and red cards to players. Referees may suggest a player be substituted and provide a cooling off period. Should a situation arise where a coach refuses to abide by the Referee's “suggestion”, the Referee should consider the safety of the other players on the field. If, in the Referee's opinion, the remaining players are at an additional risk because the coach refuses to remove the problem player, the Referee would be best advised to tell the coach that the match will be abandoned if he/she does not comply. If the coach still refuses to remove the offending player for a “time-out”, the Referee should follow through and abandoned the match. The Referee shall report any such incidents via a supplemental misconduct report on the SVSRA website.