



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION (AYSO)

NATIONAL RULES & REGULATIONS

2006-2007

I. GAME CONDUCT

All AYSO games shall be conducted in accordance with the current FIFA Laws of the Game and decisions of the International Board in effect at a date specified by the area director for his area (approximately the time of team formation for a given season), with the exceptions noted below:

A. COMPETITION

1. Coaches or other officials shall not enter the field of play, unless requested by the referee.
2. Except as noted in paragraph I.H., a minimum of seven (7) players shall constitute a team; a scheduled game shall not commence nor be continued if one or both teams cannot field seven (7) eligible players.

B. DURATION OF GAMES

1. U-6 games shall be two (2) halves not to exceed twenty (20) minutes each.
2. U-8 games shall be two (2) halves, not to exceed twenty (20) minutes each.
3. U-10 games shall be two (2) halves, not to exceed twenty-five (25) minutes each.
4. U-12 games shall be two (2) halves, not to exceed thirty (30) minutes each.
5. U-14 games shall be two (2) halves, not to exceed thirty-five (35) minutes each.
6. U-16 games shall be two (2) halves, not to exceed forty (40) minutes each.
7. U-19 games shall be two (2) halves, not to exceed forty-five (45) minutes each.
8. Half-time periods shall be a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of ten (10) minutes as designated by the referee.



C. PLAYING TIME AND SUBSTITUTION

1. Except as noted in paragraph C.4., all registered players in attendance at AYSO games must participate and play at least half of the game, excluding overtime. Players must be recognized by the referee prior to entry onto the playing field.

Such participation is controlled as follows:

- a. Approximately midway through the first half, and approximately midway through the second half, the referee halts the game, stops his/her watch and notes on the lineup cards those players substituting. Stoppage is made when the ball is out of play, and prior to the appropriate restart (i.e., throw-in, goal-kick, corner-kick, kick-off, free-kick, penalty-kick or drop ball). Additionally, substitutions may be made at half-time and at the start of any overtime periods.
 - b. Respective coaches of each team may substitute as many players or none during such interruptions, as long as all players meet the minimum playing requirements.
 - c. Players substituting must report to the referee.
2. Substitution for injury:
 - a. If a player is injured, the coach may provide a substitute for the player, in which case the injured player may not return until the beginning of the next quarter. Only the player who is injured is credited with a quarter's play regardless of the actual time played.
 - b. The coach may choose to play short thereby allowing the injured player to return during the quarter in which he was injured.
 - c. The player must be recognized by the referee in order to legally return to the game.
 3. Signed lineup cards must be completed by the referee and forwarded to the regional commissioner or designee.
 4. Late arriving players shall be substituted as follows:
 - a. If the player arrives during the first quarter, the player must play a minimum of two (2) of the remaining three (3) quarters.



- b. If the player arrives during the second or third quarter, the player must play a minimum of one (1) quarter.

D. OFFICIATING

1. Referees shall at all times impose the Rules & Regulations of competition as defined by AYSO and the FIFA Laws of the Game in general.
2. Referees shall at all times put great emphasis on the welfare of the players and officiate the game in a manner inducing clean competition and good sportsmanship. If a player is injured, the referee, at his/her discretion, may stop play to ensure the welfare of the player even if the ball has not gone out of play.
3. The Goalkeeper shall not be harassed or interfered with while attempting to put the ball in play.
4. It is the duty of referees to protect the goalkeeper against dangerous play.
5. The *Laws of the Game* are intended to provide that games should be played with as little interference as possible, and in this view it is the duty of referees to penalize only deliberate breaches of the Law. Constant whistling for trifling and doubtful breaches produces bad feelings and loss of temper on the part of the players and spoils the pleasure of spectators.

E. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES AND OFFICIALS

It shall be the duty of each coach and official to:

1. Conduct him/herself in a manner becoming a member of AYSO.
2. A rectangle defining the coaches' area shall be marked where possible by two lines parallel to the touch-line extending ten (10) yards on either side of the half way line, and by two lines perpendicular to the touch-line. The edge of the coaches' area nearer the field of play shall be, where possible, at least one yard from the touch-line; the parallel edge shall be no more than three (3) yards from the touch-line.
3. At all times encourage clean competition and good sportsmanship.
4. Train and coach their respective team to the best of their ability.
5. Uphold the Rules & Regulations of AYSO.
6. Limit their sideline participation during AYSO games to positive instruction and encouragement. Sideline participation shall be limited to



two coaches from each team and they shall remain within the coaches' area as defined in Section 1.E.2. Negative comments and complaints about refereeing shall not be allowed.

7. Upon team formation, each coach must have in his/her possession a player registration form for each player assigned to the team, during team gatherings, practices, scrimmages, and games (regional, inter-regional, area, sectional, national and tournaments).
8. Present a healthy, athletic environment for players by, in the case of coaches and referees, neither consuming alcoholic beverages nor using tobacco products during practices or games or in the immediate vicinity of the soccer fields.

F. SIZE OF BALL

1. Size of ball:
 - a. U-19, U-16 and U-14 Divisions: must be 26.5 to 28.0 inches in circumference and weigh between 14 and 16 ounces (Size 5).
 - b. U-12 and U-10 Divisions: must be 25.0 to 26.5 inches in circumference and weigh between 12 and 14 ounces (Size 4).
 - c. U-8 and U-6 Divisions: must be 23.0 to 25.0 inches in circumference and weigh between 10 and 12 ounces (Size 3).

G. FIELD OF PLAY

1. Dimensions, the field of play, marking, goal area, penalty area, corner area, and goals will be at the discretion of the particular region, except during post-season play-off games where the field must conform to all FIFA Laws of the Game requirements, including the size being no less than 100 yards in length and 50 yards in width.
2. On open fields where most youth games are played, the field shall be marked, where possible, with a spectator control line parallel to the touch line (side line) at a distance of at least three (3) yards from the touch line. All coaches, referees, linesmen, and other league officials are asked to ensure that spectators remain behind this line.
3. With the exception of photographers who have received authorization from the referee, and who must remain quiet and sufficiently back from the goal line, spectators should not be allowed behind the goal line.



H. SMALL-SIDED GAMES

1. It is strongly recommended that U-6 through U-12 divisions play small-sided games, conducted in accordance with the current FIFA Laws of the Game as modified by the age appropriate AYSO Coaching Manual.
2. Small-sided games are permitted for all divisions.

II. TEAMS

- A. Team names shall bear no resemblance to a religion or nationality.
- B. Teams shall participate only in games approved by their respective Regional Commissioner and/or AYSO Special Games Committee.
- C. Each U-19 and U-16 team shall have a maximum of eighteen (18) and a minimum of twelve (12) registered players at any one time. Each U-14 through U-8 team shall have a maximum of fifteen (15) and a minimum of twelve (12) registered players at any one time. U-8 teams may optionally play with a maximum of nine (9) players on a side in which case teams shall have a maximum of thirteen (13) and a minimum of ten (10) registered players. All divisions may play optionally with teams of smaller sizes for minisoccer, indoor soccer or small-sided games, subject to rules established by the section.
- D. Every effort will be made to balance team strengths within any one age division, within a reasonable geographical area.
- E. A region or area shall not form leagues on a major and minor basis within any, or all of its divisions.
- F. Retention of players on any team shall be limited to the head coach's child (ren).
- G. The guidelines under item 400.II.C shall be followed but in certain circumstances the area director shall have the authority to allow one or more regions in that area to carry more than the maximum amount of players listed under item 400.II.C but no more than would allow each player to play one-half of each game.

III. REGISTRATION

- A. The standard age divisions for the Boys and Girls programs are as follows:



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| <u>1.</u> | Under five (5) years of age and not younger than 4 years of age. | U-5 Division |
| <u>2.</u> | Under six (6) years of age | U-6 Division |
| <u>3.</u> | Under eight (8) years of age | U-8 Division |
| <u>4.</u> | Under ten (10) years of age | U-10 Division |
| <u>5.</u> | Under twelve (12) years of age | U-12 Division |
| <u>6.</u> | Under fourteen (14) years of age | U-14 Division |
| <u>7.</u> | Under sixteen (16) years of age | U-16 Division |
| <u>8.</u> | Under nineteen (19) years of age | U-19 Division |
- B. Regions may form coed U-6 Division for boys and girls under six (6) years of age and not younger than 5 years. Regions may form co-ed U-5 divisions for boys and girls under five years of age and not younger than four years. Teams formed in this division will be primarily for the introduction of soccer skills and techniques to the children, not for competitive purposes.
- C. The effective date of age determination shall be the player's age as of July 31st immediately prior to the start of the membership year as defined in Article V. Players who have reached the age of four years as of this date are eligible to participate in the program. Players who are nineteen years of age or older as of this date are not eligible to participate.
- D. In regions where not enough players are registered to make any or all standard age divisions, a lesser number may be formed. Such divisions shall be classified on the basis of the oldest player and shall not, subsequent to the start of the season of play, be reclassified (to a lower age division) should the oldest player(s) then be removed from the roster. Regions with a sufficient number of players within a standard age division may, with the approval of the Area Director and Section Director, form single-year sub-divisions within the standard age divisions defined in III.A.
- E. The regional commissioner is responsible for assuring the eligibility of all players on teams within the region. Any player must present birth certificate or other legal proof of age to the regional commissioner or area director upon request.
- F. No player may register without the written consent of a parent or guardian, (unless that player is of legal age), and the approval of the regional commissioner.



- G. A player becomes an official team member only after payment of the required registration fee and acceptance of registration form by the regional commissioner, or the designated representative.
- H. A player may be a member of only one AYSO league-team at any one time.
- I. Sections may exercise the prerogative to allow boys and girls to play on the same teams where there is an insufficient number of players to establish separate teams with reasonable application of paragraph III.D. It is strongly recommended, however, that separate boys and girls teams be instituted and maintained wherever possible.

IV. TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

A player may transfer from one team to another within one region or from one region to another, after the following conditions have been met:

1. Approval of both coaches of the teams involved.
2. Approval of regional commissioner(s).
3. Approval of player or parent.

V. DURATION OF SEASON

The official playing season of AYSO shall be from August 1st through the following July 31st each year.

VI. PROPER DRESS

- A. Each chartered and pilot (upon the third anniversary of their pilot inception/existing pilot programs three years commencing July 1, 2004) AYSO region shall provide for players to wear a matching team uniform consisting of jersey, shorts, and socks. Such uniform shall be properly marked with the AYSO logo on the left front of the jersey and otherwise conforms to the markings on the attached drawing.
- B. The AYSO uniform may bear a manufacturer's name and/or trademark provided that the brand name and/or trademark is contained in the same location(s) on uniforms available to the general public.
- C. The AYSO uniform may bear an optional emblem on the sleeve and/or the front of the shorts in accordance with the attached drawing. Such emblems shall be approved by the regional commissioner, shall be about three (3) inches in diameter (or equivalent diagonal), and shall generally provide for player, regional or sponsor identity.



- D. The AYSO Uniform may not bear the player name or team name by any application of lettering, silk screening, etc.
- E. Each section shall determine the application of dress code to competitive play within the section, each area within the area, and each region within that region, respectively.
- F. Regulation soccer shoes, gym shoes, or sneakers (with or without rubber cleats) are permissible in all AYSO competitions.
- G. Players shall not be allowed to participate in any game or practice unless they are wearing shin guards.
- H. Players shall not be allowed to practice or participate in any game with any type of cast or splint. Removal of any type of cast or splint at the field or surrounding area in order to participate shall disqualify the player from practice or in any game.
- I. Players shall not wear anything that is dangerous to either themselves or other players.

VII. OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY OF UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

The custodianship and disposition of equipment and supplies purchased by an individual region shall be the responsibility of that region.

VIII. INJURIES

Any injury or damage involving an AYSO participant shall be reported to, and by, the regional commissioner in accordance with the directive of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) National Support & Training Center.

*NOTE: Most recent changes are indicated by **bold-type** and are underlined.*



3" or 4" AYSO Emblem on
Left Front of the Jersey

Number on Back
of Jersey and
(optionally) on the
front of the
uniform. (Number
on front of
uniform not to
exceed 4" in
height.)

Optional Emblem
(Region, Skills or
Sponsor) on Right
Upper Sleeve or
on Front of Shorts



Standard
Manufacturer's
Mark or Sleeve
Design (Optional)

on both legs.

Shin guards worn

NOTE:

1. The AYSO emblem (registered trademark) shall be worn on the left front of the jersey. The uniform number, not to exceed 4" in height, may also be put on the front of the uniform.
2. Except as indicated in Note 1. and in the drawing, additional markings on uniforms are not permitted.
3. For clarification of proper application of AYSO and manufacturers' logos refer to the AYSO National Rules & Regulations Section VI. A.