

Program Handbook

for Recreational Teams, Coaches & Participants



The Dublin Soccer League
Dublin, Ohio



2025 Edition



Program Handbook

for Recreational Teams, Coaches & Participants

THE DUBLIN SOCCER LEAGUE

Your community soccer program

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WELCOME

Soccer, like other recreational sports, began with the support of community volunteers many years ago. As its popularity increased and programs expanded, the need for a formal, separate entity to organize and operate the sport within the community was apparent. Eventually this resulted in the 1989 incorporation of the Dublin Soccer League (DSL), a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation.

Today, the DSL has over three hundred adult volunteers providing fee-based recreational services to over 2500 youth in the Dublin community. Managed by its participants, its greatest assets are the many valuable volunteer team coaches.

The community realizes many benefits from the partnership between the Dublin Soccer League and the City of Dublin. Evidence of the value of this partnership includes:

- Frequent appearances of community high school soccer teams in state playoffs - including becoming state champions;
- The evolution of several soccer tournaments in Dublin attracts teams and visitors from twenty different states;
- Overnight stays in Dublin hotels as a result of soccer related activities account for more room nights than any other activity except the Memorial Tournament and the Dublin Irish festival;
- Sponsorship of the Dublin Charity Cup soccer tournament has resulted in well over \$750,000 provided to children's charities over a thirty-year period;

Community support has enabled the DSL to become one of the largest recreational soccer programs in the state.

As such, we are grateful to the City of Dublin - a community that provides attractive parks and facilities to allow soccer to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

This handbook was designed to inform participants, particularly coaches, of the rules and regulations of the DSL within our soccer community. Hopefully, this effort will generate feedback to make even more improvements in our programs.

DSL GOVERNANCE

The Dublin Soccer League is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees. DSL By-Laws, changed from time to time, dictate the manner in which trustees are selected.

If interested in finding out more about how you can volunteer, please contact the DSL office.

An Executive Director and staff are employed to manage and operate the league on a day to day basis.



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DSL SOCCER PROGRAMS

Recreation programs are offered starting from U4 through U19. The “U” stands for “under” that particular age, using the calendar year to determine age groups as recognized by the United States Soccer Association (USSF).

Most games are scheduled on nine Saturday mornings beginning late summer and seven weekends of April and May during the spring (ending just prior to Memorial Day weekend). Coaches determines practice days and times. The DSL office does not typically maintain this information.

Registering a child for both fall and spring sessions at the same time ensures they remain on the same team for a seasonal year and avoids the problem of forgetting to re-register.

In addition to our recreational programs that offer limited or no travel, DSL offers a select program called Dublin Soccer Excel – DSX. DSX is for U9-U15 players interested in a higher level of competition and travel to neighboring communities. DSX teams are formed through an evaluation process, have licensed-parent coaches. Evaluations for DSX take place following Memorial Day in May.

Online coaching resources and instructional materials are available for use. Contact the DSL office.

NON-RESIDENT FEE

Registrants residing outside the Dublin City limits are assessed a non-resident fee per season by the City of Dublin. The DSL collects and passes this fee on to the City. The City processes registrant addresses through a GIS database to verify residency. **Do not rely on your mailing address to determine residency.** Any payments made to DSL may be used to satisfy the City's requirement before being applied directly to DSL fees.

TEAM COMPOSITION

The Dublin Soccer League forms recreational teams from registered players within the community. In the simplest terms, a “recreation team” has players assigned to it by the league while a “select (travel) team” has players selected exclusively by a coach, usually through a tryout process.

The league requires that each player must play at least one-half of each game except for reasons of injury, illness, or discipline.

As is currently recommended by US Soccer, the calendar birth year is used to determine the player's age group for team assignments.

The Dublin Soccer League separates teams by gender (except for U4s, U5s and HSSA) primarily due to our large number of participants and as a convenient way to group teams for scheduling purposes. It also reduces the potential for adult coaches to unintentionally exhibit favoritism to one gender or the other.

Carded (travel) players are not permitted to play with a recreational team at any event. In addition to prohibiting select, competitive (travel) team players from playing in the recreation league, the Dublin Soccer League does not knowingly accept players who also participate in any other local non-school sponsored soccer league.



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The DSL attempts to group players geographically focusing on the closest Dublin public school attendance area. Factors such as availability of volunteer coaches, gender, and the number of players within a geographic area are additional factors in determining team placement.

In general, except in combined age groups (such as U-11/12, MSSA and HSSA for example), the DSL does not necessarily keep teams together unless specifically requested to do so by coaches and/or parents. The league favors random assignments of players to teams to increase the likelihood of achieving a balance among teams by mixing novice and experienced players and exposing players to different coaches with varying demeanors and coaching styles.

In addition, as players proceed through age groups, the number of players assigned to a team may vary, as may the total number of teams within a given age group. Change in the make-up of teams becomes inevitable.

No player, coach, volunteer, employee or referee shall be discriminated against because of their race/ethnicity, religion, creed, national origin or sexual orientation.

AGE VERIFICATION

In order to verify the correct placement of a participant, the Dublin Soccer League requests a copy of a birth certificate or other government issued form of identification with a birth date. Upon request, the DSL will simply examine the document and not maintain a copy on file. The information is not used for any other purpose and any copies will be routinely destroyed in a manner that maintains identity security. Competitive, carded, players must include a birth certificate as part of their record.

MISREPRESENTATION

Any person who submits or uses or who knowingly permits the submission of or use of a fraudulent birth certificate for any type of registration is in violation of DSL and possibly national standards. Upon a finding that a violation has deliberately occurred, DSL may suspend any offending adult party for up to three years. DSL has established that the offending player may be suspended for the remainder of the seasonal year and forfeit remaining fees paid for that year.

Lesser penalties shall be established by all leagues in Ohio Soccer for any player who knowingly permits the submission of or use of a fraudulent birth certificate, player registration form, coach registration form, team roster, travel permit, player pass, coach pass or other US Youth Soccer or OSA document.

These requirements shall be applicable whether the document was prepared or submitted during the use of an internet based registration as outlined in section 3.6 of Ohio Soccer By-laws or through the use of a manual form.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

The Dublin Soccer League reserves the right to suspend or refuse an individual or family's participation in its programs for cause. Reasons may include any sort of litigation (or threat thereof), abusive behavior towards staff or volunteers, fraudulent financial claims, persistent misconduct, delinquency, harassment (including through social media), deception, unruliness, etc.



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RESEARCH FEE SCHEDULE

Participant requests to research, retrieve or review registration forms, payments, dates of participation, etc.:

First fifteen minutes –	no charge
Hourly rate thereafter –	\$25.00/hour, one hour minimum
Expedite fee (rush) –	\$100.00, determined by DSL

Requests are accepted time permitting. Payment in advance of up to \$100.00 may be required.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Dublin Soccer League's primary purpose is to provide a positive soccer experience for players. Your help is valuable. Parents interaction with players, coaches, referees and other parents must be a positive one. Unacceptable behavior of parents is not permitted within our organization. Please understand that your behavior is crucial to your players soccer experience and our goal is to help players find the love of the game. Here are ways to make your experience more enjoyable:

- Commit to transporting your child to and from practices and games on time.
- Notify the DSL office of change in status (decided to play or not play; change of email, address or phone; age or school correction).
- Dress your child appropriately for games and practices:
 1. **Shin guards are required at all times**, covered by soccer socks worn on the outside. Socks worn under the shin guard, then pulled down over them are not proper.
 2. Shoes should be soccer or tennis-type. No sharp, pointed studs or toe cleats permitted on shoes. **Baseball shoes are usually NOT acceptable.**
 3. Jewelry, earrings, watches, sharp rings, etc. are not permitted during the game subject to referee discretion. Some religious exceptions apply.
 4. In cold weather, wear warm clothing **UNDER** the team jersey with a coat available when sitting out a period. Hoods are required to be tucked under uniform shirts (for obvious safety reasons).
 5. Headgear may include any kind of soft covering (no hard-brimmed caps). Please note: headgear is subject to referee approval. Some religious accommodations apply.
 6. Long pants should be avoided except when very cold (under 50°, at least). They will become cumbersome and do not allow the referee to easily judge plays by sock color.
 7. All apparel is subject to referee approval.
- Bring a soccer ball: Size #3 for U4 through U7s; size #4 for U8s through U12; size #5 for U13 and up.
- While at the game:
 1. Watch from the side of the field **OPPOSITE** the team, away from the goal area, and at least one yard behind the touch (side) line. preferably between the 18-yard lines, and one yard from the touch (side) line.
 2. Do not stand behind the goal line or goalie.
 3. Do not enter the field of play without the referees' permission.
 4. Never argue with a referee, especially a youth referee.



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5. Shout only positive comments and encouragement. No noisemakers permitted.
6. Pick up your trash as you leave.
7. Leave your pets at home.
8. Park only in designated areas. Large or oversized vehicles (including, but not limited to, recreational vehicles, motor homes, camping trailers, commercial vehicles, box trucks, etc), which would occupy more than one single car parking space, are prohibited at venues under the control of the Dublin Soccer League without the express written permission of the DSL Executive Director. Appropriate sanctions may be applied for violations of this policy.
9. Refrain from use of alcohol, tobacco, smoking and vaping (of any substance or device) at the fields.

If, in the opinion of the referee, a spectator is deemed to be unruly, the referee is empowered to demand they leave the area of the field before play resumes.

The DSL does not typically maintain information on team practice locations or times. Players/Parents will receive this information from their head coach.

GENERAL RULES FOR COACHES

The Dublin Soccer League congratulates those who have bravely accepted the title of **Coach**. This is a recreational league dedicated to the enjoyment and development of soccer. Your emphasis as coach will be to see that your team has **FUN LEARNING** the game. Everyone loves to have a winning season, but the emphasis should be placed on each child's welfare and not the team's standing.

Coaching Qualifications

A DSL coach represents the Dublin Soccer League as an agent and steward for a group of children (the team) on behalf of the league. As such, the coach will meet several requirements including:

- Have an interest in working with a group of children to further learning the sport of soccer, building camaraderie and team spirit, and to have fun.
- Follow the Coach's Code of Conduct.
- Satisfactorily complete a background check process by the requested deadline.
- Complete requirements of Ohio's Return-To-Play law regarding concussions by the requested deadline.
- Complete requirements of Ohio's Sudden Cardiac Arrest Law (aka Lindsay's Law) by the requested deadline.
- Complete requirements of the US Center for SafeSport regarding child abuse and mandatory reporting, as necessary, by the requested deadline.
- No convictions or arrests for a criminal offense (other than traffic violations or other minor offenses).
- No offenses that offends against decency or morality or reflects poorly on the Dublin Soccer League.
- Have and maintain an accurate, current telephone number and email address available to the DSL office and the team's members.

Preference is given to those willing to give a full year (fall and spring) commitment.

Consideration is also given to the number of other commitments in which a coach may be involved.



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Coach's Code of Conduct

1. A Coach's 1st priority during every contact with players under his supervision is the health and safety of the players. Players will not be penalized for parental concerns regarding inclement weather.
2. Coaches will recognize that the greatest threat to players of serious physical harm or death in soccer occurs from the use of unanchored goals during games or practices and will refrain from using them under such circumstances. *Moving previously anchored goals is also grounds for misconduct.*
3. Coaches will treat all players, parents, coaches, referees, and others associated with DSL programs with respect including addressing players and referees in a positive manner. There shall be no dissent between players and/or coaches and the referee. Questioning a referee is considered dissent.
4. All coaches are expected to assist in maintaining proper sideline decorum by parents/spectators, specifically abuse of referees. Under no circumstances will a coach use or tolerate physical force and/or verbal abuse with players from any team. No profanity is permitted.
5. Coaches will refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco or vaping devices in the presence of parents or participants.
6. Coaches will provide players with an atmosphere that develops an appreciation of the game of soccer; emphasizes the value of sportsmanship, effort, and the fun of the game; and keeps winning and losing in proper perspective.
7. Coaches will ensure that each player plays at least one-half (50%) of each game (in recreation league games) except for reasons of injury, illness, or discipline.
8. Coaches should offer every player experience at all positions and equal opportunities to start games.
9. Only players rostered to your team may participate in scheduled games. No guest, unregistered or select (carded) players are permitted. The potential penalty for using such a player includes forfeiture of all games and coach dismissal from the league.
10. The roster is not for public disclosure by either direct duplication or via posting on a website. Rosters may not be shared with other soccer organizations.
11. Coaches shall conduct themselves in the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play in an effort to benefit all DSL participants.
12. Coaches shall follow guidelines established in Ohio Soccer's *Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse*, particularly those included in item number six. (see page 20).
13. Coaches shall ensure that each child is in the custody of an adult parent/guardian following games or practices.
14. Coaches are urged to exercise caution in the use of first aid and not dispense any type of medication.
15. Coaches, as stewards of their team and representatives of the Dublin Soccer League, shall not direct parents/participants toward other soccer programs in an effort to fulfill their own personal agenda.
16. Coaches will adhere to the policies, rules and regulations of the Dublin Soccer League.

The DSL Board of Trustees will address violations of this Code of Conduct. Consequences range from a warning to the loss of coaching privileges.



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Playing Time

USSF regulations require that each player must play at least one-half of each game in recreation leagues except for reasons of injury, illness, or discipline.

Just because "Taylor" is a better player than "Quinn" doesn't mean that Quinn isn't entitled to his/her time on the field.

GAME DAY PROTOCOL **(Primarily U6 and up)**

- Coaches are not allowed on the field during the game in any age group except U4 and U5. If there is an injury requiring coach attention, the referee will signal the coach permission to enter the field.
- The coach will emphasize skills, good sportsmanship, and team spirit rather than winning at all costs.
- Coaches are expected to stay within their team's "tactical" area, between the penalty box line ("18-yard" line) and within one-yard of the halfway line as well as one-yard away from the touch (side) line on their designated side of the field. The area from the 18-yard line to the goal line and behind the goal should always be clear of spectators, coaches and others. Referees have the authority to enforce location rules.
- Substitutes are to be at the half-line of the field prior to the substitution time and may be ignored if time is about to expire (last two minutes of a period).
- In cases where a game is stopped for an injury and coaches are permitted to enter the field, the player is expected to leave the field. On injuries, when a player is replaced, the DSL allows all subs at the halfway mark to substitute for either team.
- A team may have a maximum of three adults in a coaching capacity on the sideline.
- Teams are to switch goals at the half.
- Team personnel are to be on the opposite side of the field from the spectator/parent's side.
- Coaches may relay tactical information and encouragement. They may not scream or berate players, officials or parents.
- Coaches are to line up with their team and acknowledge their opponents respectfully following a game.
- Coaches, for U8 and up, should track their fall Win-Loss-Tie record so that teams may be seeded for spring play. Coaches will be emailed for their record at the end-of-season. Please have this information available upon request.
- No guest, sibling, unregistered or select (carded) player may play on a recreation team. Penalties may include forfeiture of all games and coach dismissal from the league.
- The use of artificial noisemakers, i.e. air horns, vuvuzelas, tambourines, megaphones, bells, whistles, bugles, or other such devices during any DSL league or tournament game by players, coaches or spectators is prohibited. It is within the referee's discretion as to whether visual materials or use of drones interferes with the game they are officiating.
- Coaches are expected to assist in maintaining proper sideline decorum by parents/spectators.



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Game Control with Yellow and Red Cards

The referee uses a whistle and colored cards to control the game. The referee is permitted to issue either a caution (yellow card) or a send-off (red card) to a coach or player immediately before, during, and/or immediately after a game to document the coach's or player's actions. A coach may substitute for a player receiving a yellow card.

Receiving two yellow cards in a game equals a red card (usually signaled by holding up a yellow card, followed immediately by displaying a red). A red card may be given immediately for serious infractions. A red card (or a second yellow card) requires a player to leave the game immediately and prohibits them from participating in the next game. A coach receiving a red (send off) card must leave the vicinity of the field immediately and not participate in any manner in the next game. Yellow and red cards issued shall be reported by the referee, in detail, to DSL administrators.

A parent or spectator ejected during the game (whether or not a red card is displayed) must leave the vicinity of the game immediately.

A send-off (red card or second yellow) requires a player or coach, at a minimum, to sit out the following game of that season. The initial penalty/suspension by a referee is typically not subject to appeal.

Letting Up

All coaches should be willing to "let up". A team substantially ahead of their opponent should use this opportunity to give players with less ability additional playing time. This is also a time to concentrate on developing individual technical and tactical skill and to reposition players to gain experience in less familiar positions rather than focusing on continuing to score. What constitutes a substantial lead is subjective but consider your opponents' situation.

It's great to win, but there is no useful purpose in devastating your opponent. Let the other team leave the field with dignity. DSL does not have a mercy rule.

Rotating Positions

Players should not be limited to playing only one position or part of the field. They should be exposed to playing different positions throughout the course of the season.

This especially pertains to the younger age groups. Limiting a child to one position diminishes the opportunity to learn and improve other skills. Riley may not show much skill in a certain position at the beginning of the season but may be great at it by the fifth game.

Playing goalie may be an intimidating position for some children. Never force a reluctant player into the goalie box. Ask for players willing to be goalie or at least willing to try the position.

Team Practices

Practices are generally held once a week for approximately one hour for younger ages groups and may be slightly longer or more frequent for older age groups. The team coach sets the place, day, and time preferably in consultation with team parents. Practices usually commence a week or two prior to the start of the season.

If field space appears in demand, limit your team's practice area to one-half of a field. Practicing teams must also clear a field 15-minutes before a scheduled game is to begin to allow the competing teams adequate pre-game warm-up time.



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A team doing pre-game warm-ups should also limit their activities to one-half of the field to be used for the game.

Coaches, to increase safety, shall ensure that each child is in the custody of an adult parent/guardian following games or practices.

Field Conflicts

The DSL monitors scheduled game activity at Avery Park and Darree Fields. While every attempt is made to ensure a field is assigned for one and only one game, occasionally more than two teams show up for the same field, especially as the fields are used by several leagues.

If this occurs, games associated with a travel or "carded" league have priority, followed by MSSA and non-DSL games as these may involve out-of-area teams that may have traveled a considerable distance. If a field conflict occurs, understand the situation was not intentional. Please try to use another appropriately sized unscheduled field. If this is not possible, contact the office to reschedule a field.

Space at local schools and other locations are not monitored and not scheduled for practices or games by the DSL. They are presumed to be first come, first served.

No Rescheduled Recreation Games

Coaches should not arbitrarily cancel their Saturday morning recreation games. If you cannot field a team with the minimum number of players for your age group, consider sharing players with your opponent in a scrimmage. Although the game will be considered a forfeit, at least participating players from both teams will have fun on the field.

If a game must be cancelled, contact the DSL office at least 48-hours ahead of time so that referees can be contacted. This game will be considered a forfeit for the team cancelling.

With few exceptions, Saturday morning recreation games cannot be rescheduled. This is due to the large number of participants in the DSL and the limited availability of fields and referees. To compensate for any rainouts, DSL has added an additional game to the fall season, increasing the number of games from 8 to 9. Cold and often snowy weather in the springtime coupled with Memorial Day weekend and end of school in late May restrict spring games to a 7-week season.

Rescheduling MSSA/HSSA Games

MSSA/HSSA coaches need to verify all game dates and times for the entire season with opposing teams as soon as their schedule is received. Occasionally, games require rescheduling. Contact the DSL office to determine field and referee availability. The more lead-time (and options) you give the office for rescheduling, the easier it will be for everyone, especially your team's parents. Last moment changes require significant effort on everyone's part.

Home games cancelled with less than 48-hours minimum notice require payment to the referees. If an opponent cancels with less than 48 hours' notice, they are responsible for paying the referees if a makeup game is scheduled regardless of the make-up game location.



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Reporting Scores

MSSA team coaches must follow reporting protocols for game scores so that they can be appropriately placed for end-of-season tournaments and for tracking performance.

Recreation team coaches, for ages U8 and above, need to report their team's Win-Loss-Tie record at the end of the fall season to the DSL office. This allows the teams to be seeded for spring. Placement of teams with like records into the same round of games allows teams to have a competitive, but enjoyable schedule. If the team's record is not obtained, the office may simply have to guess as to the best placement.

In the U10 and U11/12 age groups, coaches are required to report their team's spring record following the end of week six games to set up brackets for the end-of-year recreation tournament.

Rainout Procedures

Saturday morning games

In the event of strong downpours or significant rainfall resulting in flooding or standing water on the fields, games may be cancelled for a portion of the day or for the entire day.

A determination to cancel is usually made early Saturday morning. Once determined, the DSL will post all day cancellations on our website and Facebook page. We will also attempt to post announcements regarding cancellations for specific hours, however, this may be difficult at times. No one will be at the office to receive calls regarding cancellations.

When in doubt as to whether a game is on or not the best policy is to SHOW UP. Do not assume that because an earlier game was cancelled, your game will be as well. Generally, games cancelled due to inclement weather cannot be made up.

Weekday games

Weekday games are seldom cancelled in advance. Cancellations for games scheduled outside of the Saturday morning program are usually determined at the field prior to play by the game officials. In general, the office will not know the status of individual weekday games or practices. The DSL website is the best point of reference for general bulletins.

Bleeding and Bloodborne Pathogens

A player who is bleeding or has blood on their uniform is required to leave the field of play. The player may return to the field only when bleeding has stopped and the uniform cleansed (rinsed thoroughly with water) or changed. The coach may wish to keep a similar colored shirt available for this purpose. For additional protection, cover any cuts or scrapes. These precautions will help reduce the transmission of blood-borne infections.

Basic first aid equipment is available at the south side of the soccer concession stand at Avery Park on Saturday mornings where DSL maintains its headquarters.

Attention to Medical Concerns

Parents should inform coaches of their child's team of any medical conditions that may affect the player's health or ability to play.

Information received by coaches from the DSL office or a player's parents regarding medical conditions should be regarded as confidential, and therefore not disseminated.



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Children may need to use assistive devices. Larger external devices such as casts need to be cleared with the game referee. Casts should be padded with foam rubber and wrapped in tape or spandex bandage in order to ensure that the injury potential of the cast to other players is minimized. (Consideration of the potential injury to the player himself is always a parental decision.)

Smaller devices such as glasses and hearing aids (including cochlear implants) are acceptable to wear during play and are not considered a concern. Soccer specific protective headgear is also acceptable. Some additional restrictions may be placed on goalkeepers due to their specialized functions.

Coaches are urged to exercise caution in the use of first aid and not dispense any type of medications.

Concussions and Ohio's Return-To-Play Law

The common result of a blow to the head, a concussion, is a trauma-induced brain injury that ranges from mild to severe but should never be taken lightly.

DSL follows Ohio's Return-To-Play Law regarding concussion protocol: during any game, scrimmage, practice or other athletic activity supervised by a DSL coach, referee or league official, if a player exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury then that player shall be prohibited from further participation in any athletic activity on that same calendar day.

Some signs of concussion include:

- Confusion or if the child is easily distracted and cannot do normal activities
- Stares blankly
- Delayed answering of questions
- Slurred speech
- Stumbling or clumsiness, uncoordinated or cannot walk a straight line
- Cries very easily or becomes angry easily or exhibits extreme emotions
- Problem with memory, repeats self, repeatedly asks questions, unable to recall words or objects
- Loss of consciousness

When in doubt – sit them out

While under their supervision, the coach, referee or league official shall ensure that the player does not engage in any other game, scrimmage, practice or other athletic activity until the player or player's parent has submitted written evidence that they have been cleared to return to play by one of the following:

- A physician (MD or DO)
- An athletic trainer whose work is supervised by a physician
- A physician assistant
- A nurse practitioner

If there is dispute amongst a player's coach, referee, and/or a league official that is supervising the practice or competition as to whether a player has exhibited the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury, the opinion of the person who believes that a player is exhibiting the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury shall prevail. This shall mean that if any one of those decision makers believes that a player is exhibiting or has exhibited the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury, ***that opinion cannot be overruled.***



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Coaches shall have no standing to make an official determination for a player on a team other than the team they are assigned to coach under the requirements of Ohio's "Return to Play" law and/or this section.

If you suspect a head injury has resulted in some degree of concussion, seek medical attention. ***When in doubt – sit them out.***

Heading the Ball

Consistent with US Soccer/US Youth Soccer recommendations and/or requirements, intentional, deliberate heading of the ball during games or practices by players in U-12 and younger programs is prohibited by the DSL.

During DSL games, an intentional or deliberate header will be treated as a dangerous play foul. Referees will award an IFK (Indirect Free Kick) to the opposing team of a player committing the foul

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Law (aka Lindsay's Law)

The DSL follows the provisions mandated by Ohio's Lindsay's Law, a law about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. It covers all athletes 19 years or younger who practice for or compete in athletic activities. Activities may be organized by a school or youth sports organizations.

SCA is when the heart stops beating suddenly and unexpectedly. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. People with SCA will die if not treated immediately. SCA can be caused by:

- A structural issue with the heart, or
- A heart electrical problem which controls the heartbeat, or
- A situation such as a person who is hit in the chest or gets a heart infection.

Some warning signs of SCA: a family member died suddenly before age 50 or a family member has cardiomyopathy, long QT syndrome, Marfan syndrome or other rhythm problems of the heart.

The following symptoms are warning signs of SCA in a young athlete during or accompanying exercise:

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Unexplained fainting/near fainting or dizziness
- Unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusually fast or racing heart beats

The coach **MUST** remove the youth athlete from activity immediately if they experience syncope (fainting) before, during or after a practice, scrimmage, or competitive play.

The youth athlete **MUST** be seen and cleared by a health care provider. This written clearance must be shared with the coach and school or sports official before return to activity.

If the youth athlete experiences any other warning signs of SCA they should be seen by a health care professional.

A physician (MD or DO), a certified nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist or a certified nurse midwife can evaluate and clear a youth athlete in writing. For school athletes, a physician's assistant or licensed athletic trainer may also clear a student. That person may refer the youth to another health care provider for further evaluation.

All youth athletes (regardless of age) and their parents/guardians, along with coaches, must acknowledge review of information about Sudden Cardiac Arrest prior to participation.



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Emergency Cell Phone Calls

Many wireless phones, digital or analog, search for the first available cell tower in the area to connect a call. Calls from Darree Fields, for example, may be received by Union or Delaware County safety officials.

Since the city of Dublin is served, primarily, by the Washington Township Fire Department, a name shared by townships in other nearby counties, older cell phones, which are not currently location identified, can lead to confusion over the exact location of the emergency.

For clarity, if you use 911 from a wireless phone:

- Be sure to specify that you need to speak to the Dublin Police or Washington Township-Franklin County Fire Dept.
- The Dublin Police non-emergency number is 614-889-1112.

EMS Transport

While not currently the case in Dublin/Washington Township, a growing trend in Columbus and other communities is to invoice those who use emergency medical service (EMS) transport. Insurance often covers part of this cost; however, if you are not a resident of the responding community's EMS transport, you may be responsible for paying the remaining cost. Exercise caution and prudent judgment in considering or authorizing transport.

Religious Accommodations

In respect for religious beliefs, the Secretary General of the United States Soccer Federation has given permission for those bound by religious law to wear head coverings (such as a turban, a yarmulke, or a head scarf) provided the referee finds that the headgear does not pose a danger to the player wearing it or to other players.

The Dublin Soccer League expressly permits and directs its referees and coaches to accept religious headgear during games or practices.

During a game, the referee may insist religious or medical jewelry be taped to the chest or wrist (with info displayed) to protect both the wearer and other players.

Fundraising

The Dublin Soccer League receives solicitation and fundraising requests frequently each year from a multitude of worthy causes. In an effort to protect our participant's privacy and minimize interruptions at the fields, the DSL rarely approves these requests.

Names on Uniforms

The DSL neither prohibits nor encourages the placement of children's names on their DSL jerseys. Some organizations have suggested that children addressed by their name are more susceptible to abduction. Placement of the child's name on the jersey could conceivably facilitate this further. Placing a name on the shirt requires parent or guardian approval. Consider using soccer nicknames instead of given names. Exercise caution regarding this issue.



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Privacy Disclosure and Web Sites

The name, address or phone number of youth participants will not be publicly disclosed on the Dublin Soccer League website nor should it be on any web or social media site constructed by or for its participants.

Encoded information may be used, so long as it is not sufficient to reveal the identity of nor facilitate contact with the participant. Violators are subject to disciplinary action.

Currently on team schedules, only the coach's name may be listed in association with a specific team.

Forming an Indoor Team

The Dublin Soccer League operates sanctioned outdoor leagues for fall and spring. We have no relation with any indoor soccer facilities and do not endorse any facility.

Anyone may put together an indoor team, pay the fee, and play. Indoor teams are put together by interested parties. Coaches or parents may form an indoor team with children from their recreation team or from around the neighborhood.

Outdoor recreation teams that play indoors using their DSL team jersey and name are expected to invite everyone from the outdoor DSL team to play indoors before opening the invitation to other children to participate.

The DSL may, at its discretion, fulfill requests for additional shirts for indoor team use. However, shirts supplied for indoor teams may only include a number on a shirt of the appropriate color.



INCLEMENT WEATHER

Soccer is played in nearly all weather conditions. Because of our relatively short playing season and inability to make-up most games, we try to stay on schedule whenever possible. But safety is still *priority one*.

The challenge with decisions about inclement weather is that everyone has a different opinion as to what is a threatening weather condition.

League officials at Avery Park on Saturday mornings will contact the referees directly or sound an audible alarm to suspend play throughout the park during threatening weather conditions. Parents and players are expected to take cover, preferably in vehicles. Referees are responsible for making the decision to suspend play at Avery Park when league officials are not present and at Darree Fields Park at all times.

However, in any situation, parents and coaches should not hesitate to remove players from any weather condition they feel is unsafe or inappropriate. No one will be penalized for taking any safety related actions.



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DSL Lightning/Tornado Protocol

The DSL has adopted policies from various organizations of which we are members: Ohio Soccer Association (OSA), Ohio South State Referee Committee (OSSRC) and established guidelines to follow regarding lightning:

Games (or practices) are to be stopped immediately and players/parents to take cover:

- If lightning of any sort is observed,
- If thunder is heard, even in the distance,
- If a lightning detector/predictor sounds an alarm
- If an audible tornado siren sounds an alarm

Return to the field and resume play (or practice) after:

- Waiting at least 30-minutes after the last observation of lightning of any sort, OR
- Waiting at least 30-minutes after the last sound of thunder, even in the distance, OR
- Waiting at least 30-minutes after the initial alarm from a lightning detector/predictor, unless an all-clear has sounded, OR
- Waiting at least 30-minutes after the alarm from an audible tornado siren has last been heard,
- Whichever occurs last!

In the case of an audible tornado siren only, play may resume in less than thirty minutes if the warning/watch which initiated the siren has been discontinued or expired.

Dublin Lightning Prediction System

The City of Dublin's Thor Guard Lightning Prediction System is active year-round from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM.

The system measures and analyzes the electrostatic field in the atmosphere and ground and emits a loud horn when conditions suggest there is a likelihood of a lightning strike within two miles of the park. A blinking amber strobe following the horn signifies that the park is under "red alert" conditions. When it is safe to resume outdoor activities, three (3) consecutive horn blasts will sound and the amber blinking light will cease. The prediction system is installed as an informational tool only, to be used in conjunction with common sense. See the placards posted on the front of the restroom facilities for additional information at both Darree Fields and Avery Park.

The DSL believes this system is primarily an informational tool and not the sole determinate of practice or play as the result of numerous documented errors with the system. As such, DSL feels the *DSL Lightning/Tornado Protocol* more adequately protects our participants.

Every five seconds between the flash of lightning and the rumble of thunder is one-mile distance. Experts suggest if you can hear the thunder you are in danger of getting struck as lightning can travel as far as ten miles from a "parent" cloud.



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GOALPOST DANGERS

Many articles in the press have been written about goalposts falling over, resulting in injuries or deaths. It is without exaggeration to say this is a concern throughout the soccer community and has resulted in at least one death and several injuries in central Ohio. Nearly every coach can relate a story about "how little 'Pele' was nearly hit with that falling goal at practice the other night."

The danger is inherent in the design of goals. They are generally top heavy, especially older models, as a result of having a horizontal crossbar at the top and require pegs or other devices to secure them to the ground.

Unanchored goals fall over because they are not secured to the ground and:

- Any relatively strong wind will knock them over;
- Players climb on, hang from, or climb the net of a goal and tip it over.

Goals are found not anchored with pegs because:

- Coaches and teams move the goals to facilitate a practice;
- Field setup for games or practices, including goal placement, has not been completed;
- Goals were moved to facilitate mowing or field lining and not replaced.

Death and injuries can result from the impact of a goal falling over and hitting the head or chest.

Before practice or games, coaches and referees should check to see that sufficient pegs are in place to anchor the goal to the ground. For games, the referee is responsible for determining a field is safe to play. For practices, coaches should be sure goals are secure or place sufficient weight on the ground strip to keep the goal from tipping. Regard any field not set up for an assigned game as potentially unsafe.

Make sure all goals are secure to the ground!

RISK MANAGEMENT

Background Check

The Dublin Soccer League, as part of its affiliation with the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), participates in a risk management program as a second line of defense for recognizing and addressing sexual abuse and exploitation in youth sports. Parents are the first line of defense.

As such, we require all adults including, but not limited to, those recognized as coaches, referees, staff or board members to complete a regular online background check as prescribed by the USYSA and administered statewide by the Ohio Soccer Association (OSA).

A DSL roster will be released only to an individual who has successfully completed a background check.

Serious concerns should be brought to the immediate attention of the Risk Management Program Coordinator for the Dublin Soccer League at 614-793-8320.

In addition, under laws of the state of Ohio, we are required to provide volunteers for our league with the following notice:



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Notice to Volunteers

A provision of recently passed legislation by the Ohio General Assembly requires organizations such as the Dublin Soccer League (DSL) to notify prospective and current volunteers who have or will have unsupervised access to children on a regular basis that they may, at any time, be subject to a criminal records check.

“Unsupervised access” means that the person in question has access to a child and either of the following applies: (1) No other person 18 years old or older is present in the same room with the child or (2) if outdoors, no other person 18 years old or older is within a 30-yard radius of the child or has visual contact with the child.

Volunteers in this capacity might, at any time, be required to provide a set of fingerprints and a criminal records check might be conducted. The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) would conduct the criminal records check.

In addition to Ohio law, the Ohio Soccer Association (OSA), the soccer governing authority with which we are affiliated, requires the Dublin Soccer League to have all individuals that have access to children complete an online volunteer disclosure as part of their Risk Management Program.

To comply with OSA, an individual must complete a background check prior to DSL recognition as a coach or co-coach. A DSL roster will be released only to an individual who has completed a background check.

If you have any questions, please contact the Dublin Soccer League office at 614-793-8320.



Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse

Ohio Soccer Association

The Ohio Soccer Association is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and ensuring their safety and well-being while involved in sponsored activities.

To this end, we have established the following guidelines of behavior and procedures for our staff, volunteers and participants. All members of this organization, as well as parents, spectators and other invitees are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

1. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. This means we do not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.
2. Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.
3. Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: yelling, insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.



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4. We are committed to providing a safe environment for our players, participants and staff. We do so by appointing all coaches, officials and volunteers – and anyone else affiliated with our organization – as protection advocates. Every member of this organization is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.

5. Buddy System: We recommend that every activity sponsored by our program put a Buddy System in place. Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere – to the bathrooms, locker rooms, or other location – without his or her buddy.

6. To further protect our youth participants, as well as our coaches, officials and volunteers, we strongly advise that no adult person allow him/herself to be alone with a child or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, we recommend that coaches or other adult members of this organization:

- Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car.
- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other any other private room.
- Provide one-on-one training or individual coaching with the assistance of another adult or the child's buddy.
- If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of in a private office.
- Coaches and other adult members of this organization should not socialize individually with the participants outside of sponsored activities

7. Supervision/Chaperone ratio: We recommend that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be 1:8, one (or more) adults for every eight children, with a minimum of two adults for every activity.

8. When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms.

9. We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

10. We encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, games, practices and other events. The more the parents are involved, the less likely it is for abusive situations to develop.

11. We will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization's directors. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

12. Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the board until the matter is resolved. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.



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13. We promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers. We advocate building strong self-images among the youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.



REFEREES

NEVER argue with a referee, especially a youth referee. All refs, like all humans, make mistakes. Keep in mind this is just a game and a bad call is not the end of "Messi's" soccer career. However, yelling at a youth ref could be the end of a coaching career!

Remember, as a coach, your players are watching you. Teach respect and encourage both players and parents to be respectful.

If you find yourself or a player in the middle of a confrontation, send for assistance immediately. Headquarters for Saturday morning soccer games at Avery Park is the soccer concession stand referee room (south side).

Nearly all referees have completed a USSF referee certification course. The responsibilities of the referee are varied, but include:

- Maintain safe play by adequately controlling the game.
- Maintain safe equipment by checking goals, fields and uniforms.
- Applying the rules of soccer with fairness & consistency.
- Enforcing areas where players, coaches and spectators are expected to stand.
- Maintaining a sportsmanlike atmosphere.

The authority of the referee takes effect from the time they are in the vicinity of the field until they leave the area of the field. KEEP IN MIND that the referee may award a caution (yellow card) or a send-off (red card) to maintain control of the game environment. A card can be awarded before or after a match, as well as during a match. Yellow and red cards issued shall be reported by the referee to the DSL office.

A card may not be displayed when a caution or send-off is given a coach or spectator. A team's coach may be asked to help quiet an unruly parent.

A send-off (red card or second yellow card) requires a player or coach, at a minimum, to sit out the following game of that season. The initial penalty/suspension by a referee is not subject to appeal.

The referee may suspend play pending resolution of any conflicts.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

From time to time, conflicts may arise from interactions or issues with a coach, referee, league official or other organization.

The Dublin Soccer League expects conflicts to be resolved in the following manner:

1. Discuss the matter with the responsible party. Tell them of your concerns and listen carefully to their response. Make sure both parties clearly and calmly understand the issue.



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2. If, after this discussion, the issue has not been resolved, notify site officials first, if available, then in writing to the attention of the Dublin Soccer League office.
 - In issues pertaining to the Dublin Charity Cup, contact the DCC President in care of the DSL office.
3. DSL staff will investigate all aspects and evaluate the merits of the conflict and render a decision.
4. If the initial decision by the DSL staff does not satisfactorily resolve the situation, a formal appeal of a complaint or dispute, a *Grievance*, may be officially made in writing.
5. In a *Grievance*, upon receiving a written, detailed and signed account of the dispute, the DSL office will gather all information available, including witness statements, for presentation to the DSL Grievance Committee. Various parties may be given an opportunity to present testimony favorable to their position at a hearing. After deliberation, the Grievance Committee will reach a decision.
6. Ultimately, the full DSL Board of Trustees has authority regarding any soccer related matter.

In the case of referee send-off or ejection in which a referee report is filed, the initial penalty/suspension is, in general, not subject to appeal.

Serious concerns of possible physical abuse should be brought to the immediate attention of the Risk Management Program Coordinator for the Dublin Soccer League at 614-793-8320, and in writing via email: Office@DublinSoccer.net.

EXCERPTS From The LAWS Of The GAME

Revised – Fall 2019

Seventeen Laws of the Game

Soccer consists of seventeen rules known as the Laws of the Game. Along with these rules are Decisions of the International Football Association Board. This is the governing body for world soccer rules (FIFA, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, is a member of this board). Together, these constitute the rules and guidelines referees use to officiate soccer. Many modifications are made to suit local needs and specific age groups.

Advantage clause

The feature that distinguishes soccer from most American-made sports is the *Advantage Clause*. Incorporated in *Law 5* (the referee), the *advantage clause* allows play to continue when the team against which an offense has been committed will benefit from such an advantage (play on) and penalizes the original offense if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time. Advantage applies only to infringements of *Law 12* (fouls and misconduct).

In brief, you can expect some fouls to be ignored by the referee if calling them would be a disadvantage for the team fouled. Referees will tend not to call trivial fouls or fouls that are not intentional. Whistling for trifling and doubtful offenses is not in the “spirit of the game”.

Consistency vs. Fairness

While consistency is important because it helps demonstrate impartiality, it does not imply that every call should be made and treated in the same manner. Many referee decisions are made with a degree of subjectivity as to carelessness, recklessness and excessive force. Determining intent is an important factor.

Intentional or Deliberate Heading the Ball

Intentional, deliberate, heading the ball during games or practices by players in U-12 programs and younger is prohibited by the DSL, in accordance with US Soccer/US Youth Soccer recommendations and/or requirements.



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Common Sense

The “unwritten” law – often referred to as “*Law 18*”, common sense is the ultimate goal of refereeing and applies to the use of all the rules of soccer.

An *Age Group Description* accompanies each program, to be used in conjunction with the *Program Handbook*, describes parameters such as size of field, number of players, etc. for a specific age group.

The Laws Of The Game

- 1 The Field of Play
- 2 The Ball
- 3 The Players
- 4 The Player’s Equipment
- 5 The Referee
- 6 The Other Match Officials
- 7 The Duration of the Match
- 8 The Start and Restart of Play
- 9 The Ball In and Out of Play
- 10 Determining the Outcome of a Match
- 11 Offside
- 12 Fouls and Misconduct
- 13 Free Kicks
- 14 The Penalty Kick
- 15 The Throw-in
- 16 The Goal Kick
- 17 The Corner Kick

Law 1 – The Field of Play

- See description for specific age groups
- Distinctive to soccer – the lines are part of the area which they contain.
- Padding is **not** a standard part of soccer field goal posts.

Law 2 – The Ball

See *Age Group Description* for specific age groups.

Law 3 – The Players

- Number of Players and Substitution exceptions
 - See description for specific age groups
- With exceptions noted, “normal” substitutions refer to those made:
 - after a goal has been scored,
 - at the end of a time period (half),
 - on goal kicks,
 - your own team’s throw-in
 - on injuries.
 - Never on corner kicks.



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- In addition, if a player for the opposing team is at the mid-field flag waiting to be a substitute when the team that is awarded a throw-in has a substitute to enter the game, the substitute for the opposing team may also enter the game. If the team that has been awarded a throw-in does not have a substitute, then neither team may substitute a player.
- Substitutions are to be made from the halfway mark upon approval of the referee. DSL prefers players to leave the field from the halfway mark, as well.
- Referee is to be informed before a change of goalkeeper.
- A coach may substitute a player receiving a caution.
- On injuries, when a player is replaced, the DSL allows all subs at the halfway mark to substitute for either team.

Law 4 – The Player's Equipment

- ALL PLAYERS MUST WEAR SHIN GUARDS. Shin guards are to be worn completely covered with the socks. They are not to be worn over the sock with the sock pulled over them.
- No jewelry, i.e. earrings, watches, necklaces, sharp rings.
- No sharp, pointed or toe cleats are permitted on shoes.
- No hard brimmed caps such as baseball caps.
- Casts must be well padded as approved by the referee before player can take the field.
- Teams should wear different colored shirts. (Mesh vests are available at south concession stand.) Goalies must be distinguished from field players of both teams.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT / INTERPRETATION TO COLUMBUS AREA REFEREES from the Columbus District Director of Referee Instruction regarding permissible cold weather attire for youth players is:

- Knit toboggan caps (no brims or bills or hard surfaces);
- Sweatshirts under uniform shirts (hoods must be under the shirts for obvious safety reasons);
- Sweatpants or warm-up pants under uniform shorts.

Questions of whether clothing is allowable are determined by the match referee based on whether the clothing item poses a danger to the player or to other players along with the general health considerations of the player.

Law 5 – The Referee

The authority of the referee takes effect from the time he/she is in the vicinity of the field until he/she leaves the area of the field. The DSL may use a two referee system for older age games. See *Referee* section in *Program Handbook* for more information.

Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

DSL uses a one or two-whistle method of control and does not use assistant referees (AR).

Law 7 – Duration of the Match

- See description for specific age groups
- Added time is allowed for taking of a penalty kick (U-9 and above) at the half or end of the game.
- The referee will whistle expiration of time following a natural completion of a play, at their discretion.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

- Away team calls the coin toss. Team winning the toss may choose to take the first-half kick or which goal it will attack. The team not taking the kick-off in first half will kick-off the second half.
- Second half – teams switch ends of the field.
- Goals may be scored directly from a kick-off (except in U-6 and U-7 groups).
- Ball is in play when it has been kicked and clearly moves in any direction. The distance to be moved is minimal and the 'kick' need only be a movement of the ball with the foot in a kicking motion. Tapping the top of the ball with the foot or stepping on the ball are not sufficient to constitute kicking the ball.



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- The kicker is not allowed to touch the ball a second time before it has touched another player. Penalty: Indirect FK.
- A goal cannot be awarded if a dropped ball enters the goal without the ball touching at least two players.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

- Ball is out of play if it has WHOLLY (COMPLETELY) crossed the goal line or touch (side) line.
- Rebounds from goal posts, crossbar, corner flags or referee (when on the field) does not make the ball out of play unless the referee stops the game.
- On a drop ball, the ball is in play only if it has touched the ground before being played:
 - it will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball.
 - it will be performed if it touches a match official on the field of play and one of the following results:
 - a team receiving the ball starts a promising attack or
 - the ball goes directly into the goal or
 - the ball changes possession as a result of the contact
- The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped:
 - the ball was in the penalty area or
 - the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area
- In all cases, all other players of both teams must be at least 4.5 yards away.

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

A goal is scored when the ball WHOLLY (COMPLETELY) crosses the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

Law 11 – Offside

A player is in an OFFSIDE POSITION if any part of the head, body or feet is in the opponent's half; and is nearer to his opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last opponent. (Some younger age groups do not have an offside rule. See specific age group descriptions.)

A player in an offside position at the moment the ball is played or touched by a team-mate is only penalized on becoming involved in active play by:

- interfering with play by playing or touching a ball passed or touched by a team-mate or
- interfering with an opponent by:
 - preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by clearly obstructing the opponent's line of vision or
 - challenging an opponent for the ball or
 - clearly attempting to play a ball which is close to him when this action impacts on an opponent or
 - making an obvious action which clearly impacts an opponent's ability to play the ball or
 - gaining an advantage by playing the ball or interfering with an opponent when it has:
 - rebounded or been deflected off the goalpost, crossbar or an opponent or
 - been deliberately saved by an opponent

A player is not offside if he receives the ball directly from a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in.

If an offside offense occurs, an IFK is awarded where the offense occurred, i.e. where the player was determined to have become involved in active play, e.g. where the player touches the ball or interferes with an opponent.

Law 12 - Fouls & Misconduct

Fouls

Fouls are divided into two groups, Direct Free Kick (major) and Indirect Free Kick (minor) fouls. All decisions regarding calls are based on the principle: *If In The Opinion Of The Referee....*



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Direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following seven offenses in a manner considered to be CARELESS, RECKLESS or USING EXCESSIVE FORCE:

1. Charges an opponent
2. Jumps at an opponent
3. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
4. Pushes an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Tackles or challenges an opponent
7. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent

Direct free kick also awarded for the following three offenses:

1. Handles the ball deliberately with either hand or arm
2. Holds an opponent (or their clothes)
3. Impedes an opponent with contact
4. Spits at an opponent

Wide latitude is given the referee in interpreting handling the ball. Did the player play the ball -- or did the ball play the player? Did the player use his shoulder defensively or offensively?

Deliberate handball remains an offense. The following 'handball' situations, even if accidental, will result in a free kick:

- the ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand/arm.
- a player gains control/possession of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then scores or creates a goal-scoring opportunity.
- the ball touches a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger.
- the ball touches a player's hand/arm when it is above their shoulder (unless the player has deliberately played the ball which then touches their hand/arm).

If a whistle is heard as the result of spectator action or of activity on a nearby field and if a player, thinking that play had been stopped by the referee, then illegally handles the ball, the referee may treat this as outside interference and restart with a dropped ball. However, watch for unsportsmanlike behavior.

Players are allowed the freedom to protect various parts of their bodies (i.e. boys with crossed hands over their pelvic region and girls with crossed arms over their chests) are not automatic fouls as long as they do not use it as an opportunity to control and direct the ball. This applies to both boys and girls.

A **penalty kick** is awarded if any of the above is committed in the penalty box by the defending team. It does not matter where the ball is at the time of the foul.

Indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following:

1. Plays in a dangerous manner. (high kick, playing the ball while on the ground may be deemed dangerous). At a young age, possession of the ball by the goalkeeper should be defined broadly to include simply having a hand on the ball (other than purely incidental contact). Once the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball, opponents must cease challenging or otherwise attempting to play the ball.
2. Impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made (obstructs).
3. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands.
4. Commits any offense for which a caution or dismissal occurs.



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Indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if the goalkeeper, while in his penalty box, commits any of the following four offenses:

1. Takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it from his possession.
2. Touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched another player. (His teammates count only if they are outside penalty box.) Released from possession is tricky terminology.
3. Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately (in the referee's opinion) kicked to him by a teammate.
4. Touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate.

Misconduct

Two types of action for misconduct: caution and send-off.

A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:

1. Unsportsmanlike behavior
2. Dissent in word or action of any referee decision
3. Persistently infringes the laws of the game
4. Delays the restart of play
5. Fails to respect the required distance on restart with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
6. Enters, re-enters or deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission

An indirect free kick is given to the opponent for all cautions except exit/entrance, unless a more serious penalty is applicable.

A player is sent off and shown the red card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:

1. Serious foul play
2. Violent conduct
3. Spits at an opponent or any other person
4. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball
5. Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
6. Uses offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
7. Receives a second caution in the same match

Any player given a red card including for a second caution is sent out of the game without a substitute going in (play short).

Law 13 – Free Kicks

Free kicks are either direct or indirect.

On a ***Direct Free Kick***:

- A goal may be scored directly from a direct kick on an opponent's goal
- If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the teams' own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team

Direct kicks are not applicable to all age groups. Consult DSL age group rules.



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On an **Indirect Free Kick**:

- When kicked, an indirect free kick can score a goal ONLY if the ball touches another player before it enters the goal
- If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded to the opponent
- If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the teams' own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team
- The referee should indicate an indirect free kick by raising an arm straight up until the ball has been touched by another player

For a Free Kick, when there is a 'wall' of three or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1 yard of the wall. An attacker less than 1 yard from the 'wall' when the kick is taken will be penalized with an indirect free kick.

In both types of kicks:

- The ball must be stationary when the ball is kicked
- The kicker cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves
- All opponents are at least 10 yards (may vary by age group) from the ball until kicked
- The ball is placed where the infraction occurred

Within the penalty area, defending team, direct or indirect kicks:

- All opponents must be 10 yards away AND outside penalty area
- Ball is in play when the ball is kicked and clearly moves (does not need to leave the penalty box)
- Kick within goal area is taken from any point in the goal box
- Goalkeeper cannot receive the ball under this circumstance

Within the penalty area, offensive team, on indirect kicks:

- All opponents must be 10 yards away, unless they are on their goal line between the goalposts
- Kick awarded within goal area is taken from the goal box line that runs parallel to the goal line, nearest to where the infringement occurred

Within the penalty area, a direct kick for the offensive team becomes a penalty kick. See *Law 14*.

If a player leaves the field-of-play as part of play and commits an offense against another player, play is restarted with a free kick (IFK or DFK) on the touchline or the goal line nearest where the offense occurred.

A caution can be awarded to any player who displays unsporting conduct such as distracting motions during the taking of a free kick.

Law 14 – Penalty Kicks

A penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits one of the ten offenses for which a direct free kick is awarded, if the offense occurs inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play.

A penalty kick is awarded if a DFK offense occurs off the field as part of play within the confines of the offender's penalty area.

Additional time is added at the end of a time period to take a penalty kick.



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For a penalty kick:

- The ball is placed on the penalty spot.
- All players except the goalkeeper and the player taking the kick need to be out of the penalty box AND 10 yards from the penalty spot (outside the arc) AND behind the penalty spot (12 yards out from the goal line).
- Performed under direct supervision, coordination and approval of the referee.
- When signaled by the referee, the player taking the kick must kick the ball forward and clearly moves, only once.
- The kicker cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- The penalty kicker can have a quick med check/treatment, if necessary, and then take the kick.
- For penalty kicks, the goalkeeper must not be touching the goalposts, crossbar or nets. The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken; cannot stand behind (or in front of) the line.
- For infraction, retake the kick if goal is not scored.

Consult official rulebook for various infringement/sanction scenarios.

Penalty kicks are not applicable to all age groups. Consult DSL age group rules.

Law 15 – Throw-in

When the WHOLE ball goes completely over a touch (side) line, a throw-in is awarded to the team opposite of the one that last touched it. A throw-in is taken at the point (give or take a yard) where the ball left the field of play.

Opposing players are to be no closer than two-yards from where the throw-in is to be taken.

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:

- Is facing the field of play
- Has part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
- Using both hands, delivers the ball from behind and over his head

Thrower cannot touch the ball again until it has touched another player. (An indirect free kick is awarded.)

If the ball is improperly thrown, the opposite team gets to take a throw-in. However, if the ball does not enter the field of play, the throw-in is retaken. Second throw-in is allowed for U-6 and U-7's.

Since the primary function of the throw-in is to put the ball back into play as quickly as possible, minor technical infringements of *Law 15* should be deemed trifling (do not call it).

Law 16 – Goal Kick

When the WHOLE of the ball goes completely over the goal line (and is not a goal scored (see *Law 10*)) last touched by a member of the attacking team, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team.

To perform an acceptable goal kick:

- The ball can be placed anywhere in the goal area by a player of the defending team and is in play as soon as the kick is taken. (The ball no longer needs to exit the penalty box to be played.)
- Opponents must be outside the penalty box and ten yards away from the ball until it is kicked.
- Goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team. An "own" goal will result in a corner kick (*highly unusual*) for the opposing team.
- Player taking the kick cannot play the ball a second time without the ball having been touched by another player. An indirect free kick will be awarded.



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Law 17 – Corner Kick

When the WHOLE ball goes completely over the goal line (and a goal is not scored) and having last touched a player from the defending team, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

To take a corner kick:

- The ball is placed inside the corner arc of corner nearest to where the ball went out of bounds
- The corner flag post is not moved or held
- Opposing players must remain ten yards from the ball. (Distance adjusted for younger ages)
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves

The kicker cannot kick the ball a second time until touched by another player. An indirect free kick is awarded for infraction.

A goal CAN be scored direct from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team.

