



# 2024 HR Youth Soccer League (3rd-6th Grade) Guidelines

**Mission:** to provide a positive soccer playing experience for each player

## 3rd-4th Grade Boys LEAGUE

### Pre-Game Routine and Game Play

- Coaches greet each other
- Team Managers set up fields (nets, flags, etc.)
- Parents sit on opposite sides of the field to allow coaches & players to focus on the game
- Coaches encouraged to be on the field to help direct players (also call fouls)
- Play 7 vs. 7 with goalies (10-14 players per team)
- Sub only players during dead ball situations (out-of-bounds, foul, etc.)
- Keeping score (entered score will reflect a maximum of 7 goal differential)
- No slide tackling (sliding to save a ball from out-of-bounds is ok)
- Out of bounds are throw-ins
- No headers (indirect free kick will be given to the other team)
- Teams shake hands after each game

## 3rd-4th Grade Girls LEAGUE

### Pre-Game Routine and Game Play

- Coaches greet each other
- Team Managers set up fields (nets, flags, etc.)
- Parents sit on opposite sides of the field to allow coaches & players to focus on the game
- Coaches encouraged to be on the field to help direct players (also call fouls)
- Play 7 vs. 7 with goalies (10-14 players per team)
- Sub only players during dead ball situations (out-of-bounds, foul, etc.)
- Keeping score (entered score will reflect a maximum of 7 goal differential)
- No headers (indirect free kick will be given to the other team)
- No slide tackling (sliding to save a ball from out-of-bounds is ok)
- Out of bounds are throw-ins
- Teams shake hands after each game

## 5th-6th Boys LEAGUE

### Pre-Game Routine and Game Play

- Coaches greet each other
- Coaches set up fields (nets, flags, etc.)
- Parents sit on opposite sides of the field to allow coaches & players to focus on the game
- Coaches encouraged to be on the field to help direct players (also call fouls)
- Play 9 vs. 9 with goalies (12-17 players per team)
- Sub only players during dead ball situations (out-of-bounds, foul, etc.)
- Keeping score (entered score will reflect a maximum of 7 goal differential)
- No headers (indirect free kick will be given to the other team)
- No slide tackling (sliding to save a ball from out-of-bounds is ok)

- Out of bounds are throw-ins
- Teams shake hands after each game

## 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Girls LEAGUE

### Pre-Game Routine and Game Play

- Coaches greet each other
- Coaches set up fields (nets, flags, etc.)
- Parents sit on opposite sides of the field to allow coaches & players to focus on the game
- Coaches encouraged to be on the field to help direct players (also call fouls)
- Play 7 vs. 7 with goalies (10-14 players per team)
- Sub only players during dead ball situations (out-of-bounds, foul, etc.)
- Keeping score (entered score will reflect a maximum of 7 goal differential)
- No headers (indirect free kick will be given to the other team)
- No slide tackling (sliding to save a ball from out-of-bounds is ok)
- Out of bounds are throw-ins
- Teams shake hands after each game

### Game Logistics:

- Fields are 45-55 yards wide X 70-80 yards long for boys
- Two 25-minute halves (50-minute games) with a 5-10 minute half time
- Clock is continuous – it does not stop for fouls, out-of-bounds, etc.
- Rock-paper-scissors winner kicks off 1<sup>st</sup> half and loser kicks off 2<sup>nd</sup> half
- Teams stay on same side for whole game or switch at half time
- Players at this age should be able to do a proper **throw-in**
  - Hands on the ball over the player's head, feet on the ground (no jumping)
- **Goal kicks:** opposing team is to be outside the goalie's box
- **Goalies** are not allowed to grab the ball with their hands when a teammate passes them the ball
  - The opposing team will receive an indirect freekick
- **Goalies** are not allowed to drop the ball and pick it back up during game play
  - The opposing team will receive an indirect freekick
- **Handballs** are not allowed for field players
  - Handballs will be called unless the player is protecting their face
- **Offsides** will only be called if there's a player that is in an obvious offside position
  - For example: the player is near the opponent's goalkeeper waiting for the ball while the ball is on the other side of the field
- Referees included
- Size 4 soccer ball
- If a team needs to reschedule, please reach out to the opposing team, and league coordinator 48 hours before game time
- Any match where a team falls below the required minimum number of players is a forfeit (3-0 loss)

### Spring Game Day Info / Season Length

- Game dates: April 25 – June 1
- Game days: Thursdays, Fridays
- Championship games on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at earlier times
- Game times: 5pm-8pm time frame
- Game location: Wy'east Middle School

### Game Objectives:

- Introducing players to structured play
- Coaches and parents of 9 v 9 or 7 v 7 players are encouraged to create a fun, safe, developmentally appropriate environment for players

- Players should be provided with the opportunity to play and have as much fun as possible
- Winning and losing should not be a key factor

### **Practice Recommendations:**

- One practice session per week
- 60-minute session
- Training ideas: see resources at the end of this document
- Location: your neighborhood school

### **Practice Objectives:**

- Get to know players and families
- Offensively: moves to get past the defender, passing to open teammates, players moving into space, progressing up the field
- Defensively: appropriate defensive stance, approaching, shadowing, channeling, tackling

## **COACH-TO-PARENT COMMUNICATION**

**Contact prior to first practice** – confirm best means of contact and best primary contact for child (email and/or text)

### **At first practice:**

- Explain how season will go
  - April / May / June
  - Practice/game times
- Expectation of parents
  - On-time to and FROM practice
  - Give notice if cannot attend a game
  - Arrive 30 min. before games
  - Reinforce what is learned at practice
  - Recognize that coach is coach
  - Keep it positive
- Expectation of kids (same as in the classroom)
  - Do best
  - Listen
  - Respect
  - Come prepared – shin guards for all practices and games, shoes tied, enough water, warm / cool enough clothes (parents will help with this for youngest kids)
- Identify parent helper if don't have co coach or assistant coach
  - Help with practices – setting up next drill or running drill
  - Set up snack schedule
  - Do game reminders
  - Help with kids' warmups before games while you set up field and coordinate with other coach...

### **Contact prior to first game:**

- Remind about game start time and location
- Remind about arrival time
- How you will manage substitutions
- How long games will be

**Provide updates** – what skills are worked on weekly, how many games remain, what the kids are making best progress on...

### **Provide and Update game/activity schedules:**

- Uniforms (week prior to first game)
- Pictures
- End of season (game day)

## **COACHING RESOURCES**

### **Online Soccer Training Resources**

- <http://www.footy4kids.co.uk>
- <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org>

## **THE ROLE OF THE TEAM PARENT**

The team parent is a very welcome help for the coach of a soccer team. Your volunteer help will spread out some of the jobs that go with a youth soccer team. Here are some ideas of what a team parent can do to help:

1. Make a list of the players with their addresses and phone numbers to hand out to the parents on your team. This will help to arrange carpools when needed.
2. Call the team members when practices are canceled or when special events are coming up soon, such as pre-season meetings or end-of-season parties. A great way to end the season is to have a picnic and a parent-child game of soccer.
3. Coordinate the bringing of snacks and drinks for the end of each game. This is often the highlight of the game day for the players. Experience has shown that nutritious and not-too-sugary items are better.
4. Announce a team picture day and arrange for someone to grind a camera.
5. Parents sit on opposite side of the players.

### **Other Ways to Help**

A team parent can also help in other ways such as modeling behaviors at games that are sporting and helpful to players.

For instance, suppose a well-meaning parent from your child's team is yelling out onto the field.

It might go something like this...

"Sarah, pass the ball to Michele now!"

Or

"Sidney, get back by the goal!"

Or

"C'mon, ref, call it both ways!"

Each of these instances involves a behavior that is discouraged by the soccer community. Calling players by name to get them to do something sets the players up for failure.

In the first instance, Sarah will be too late with her pass by the time she hears her parent yell the instructions. If she passes anyway, the other team will probably get the ball.

In the second instance, the coach may have been encouraging the players to move away from the goal so that more attacking play can develop at midfield.

In the third instance, players may decide to show dissent to the referee if the parents are leading the way with unsporting comments.

As a team parent, you can model correct behaviors such as cheering the players without instructing them or praising them for sporting behavior when shaking hands with the other team at the end of the game.