

Basic Rules of Soccer for Younger Players

1. **Start of play:** The kick-off is taken at the center spot and is determined by a coin toss. The ball has to move forward to start the half. Each player must be in his or her half of the field and at least ten yard away from the ball. If a referee has to do a drop ball, the play resumes when the ball hits the ground.
2. **Ball in and out of play:** The ball is out of play when it COMPLETELY goes over the goal line or touch-line. It doesn't matter whether it's in the air or on the ground.
3. **Method of scoring:** The ball must COMPLETELY go across the line into the goal.
4. **No Hands:** The illegal use of hands is one of the most basic rules of soccer, but one to which kids might have trouble adapting. It is illegal to use the hands or arms to control, bat down, or otherwise intentionally contact the ball. Unintentional contact by the hands or arms, such as the ball deflecting off a hand or arm, is not a violation if judged unintentional by the referee. The goalie is an exception to this rule in most cases. The goalie may use his hands to deflect shots or passes by the opposing team. However, the goalie may not use his hands to handle a pass from his own teammate; he must use his feet.
5. **Fouls and Misconduct:** At the youth level most fouls are due to pushing, holding or tripping and result in a free kick. Other ones to watch out for are handballs and charging.
6. **Throw in:** The thing to teach your players is both feet have to be on the ground, must have two hands on the ball, and the throw must come from behind the player's head. The penalty for a bad throw in is that the opposing team get the ball. Some leagues don't enforce these rules or give the player two chances.
7. **Goal Kick:** A goal kick is granted when the attacking team kicks the ball over the goal line. The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has left the penalty area and has been touched by another player on either team.
8. **Corner Kick:** A corner kick is awarded when the defending team kicks the ball over their own goal line. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
9. **Off sides:** One of the most complicated laws of the game. Most leagues don't apply off sides till they start playing 11 V 11. The basic concept is that a player must have at least one defender (not including the goal keeper) between him and the goal WHEN the ball is played to him. Also to be offside the player must be in the opponent's side and looking to gain an advantage.