

Heading Protocol



Arlington Soccer Association

No heading in training or games (10 years of age or younger)

Applicable ages for fall 2017-spring 2018:

Rec: 5th grade or younger

ADP: 2007s or younger

Travel: 2007s or younger

- [Coaches are instructed not to teach heading to any player aged 10 \(5th grade\) or younger.](#)
- Coaches are encouraged to develop a style of play which focuses on keeping the ball on the ground, and being creative with their set pieces
- Goalkeepers will be encouraged to play short in order to keep the ball on the ground, but will be allowed to punt the ball to relieve pressure if needed.
- If players play in a game which is part of a league which allows heading, Arlington Soccer players will still be instructed to not head the ball. If they do so, they will get a reminder from the coach.

Introductory Phase (Between the ages of 11 and 13 years old)

Applicable ages for fall 2017-spring 2018:

Rec: 6th grade through 8th grade

ADP: 2006s

Travel: 2006s through 2004s

- Heading may be introduced at these ages in practices, and allowed in game ([Technical Points](#))
- Heading must be introduced in a manner which limits the distance (5 yards or less) and speed a ball travels before reaching a player's head.
- Coaches must limit head-to-ball contact to around 20 repetitions per week in practices when using a normal, fully inflated soccer ball. The size of the ball cannot be larger than what is used in a game for that age.
- Coaches are encouraged to use modified balls when introducing the topic, which are lighter and/or provide more cushion. If a modified ball is used, coaches may increase the number of repetitions a player may head the ball per week in practice (up to 40 maximum). ASA will provide modified balls to coaches of affected age groups.

Competency Phase (Ages 14 and above)

Applicable ages for fall 2017-spring 2018:

Rec: 9th grade and up

ADP: N/A

Travel: 2003s and up

- Players are allowed to head the ball without restriction in training and in games
- Coaches are encouraged to use best judgement when designing training sessions with respect to number of heading repetitions per player per day.

[All coaches are required to complete concussion prevention and recognition training, found here.](#)