



**Arlington Soccer**  
**PLAYING RULES**

**3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
**GROUPS**

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# PLAYING RULES

## 3RD AND 4TH GRADE GROUPS

The following rules of play and additional instructions will apply to all games and scrimmages for Arlington Soccer's (ARL) Recreational Soccer League. The Laws of the Game as authorized by the International Federation of Association Football (F.I.F.A.) and the United States Soccer Federation (U.S.S.F.) shall apply in all cases except as follows:

### LAW 1 FIELD OF PLAY

- The field of play is rectangular, its length being no more than 70 yards or less than 60 yards and its width not more than 50 yards or less than 40 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width.
- Goals are set in place at the center of each end-line. Goals are 6 feet tall and 18 feet wide.
- The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it.
- A Goal Area is marked fourteen (14) yards in width and four (4) yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the end-line.
- A Penalty Area is marked twenty-nine (29) yards in width and twelve (12) yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the end-line is the penalty area. A penalty mark is made ten (10) yards out from the midpoint between the goalposts. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from the penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.
- Two 'build out lines' will be drawn perpendicular across the field, dividing the field into thirds. **(See 'Build Out Line' references in Offside, Goal Kicks, and Additional Instructions sections below)**

### LAW 2 THE BALL

- The 3rd and 4th Grade groups use a Size 4 ball.

### LAW 3 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- For games, each team will have seven (7) players on the field, one (1) which must be designated as a goalkeeper.
- A minimum of five (5) players must be on the field to start, or play, the game. A team with fewer than five (5) players will not be allowed to begin, or continue to play, the game; unless approved by the game referee.
- Unlimited substitutions are allowed at the following times, with permission of the referee:
  - At the halftime
  - After a goal is scored
  - When the ball crosses the end line
  - On throw-ins
  - When a player is injured. If the referee stops the game for an injured player, both teams may make substitutions.
- The player going out must be completely off the field before a new player can enter.
- Referees will allow for a 10 minute grace period to allow a team to get up to the minimum number of players to start a game and avoid a forfeit. (Time shall be subtracted from the half to ensure the game ends on time.)

#### LAW 4 PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

- Shin-guards are mandatory for all players. Shin-guards must be covered by the sock; or be built into the sock.
- Players of teams participating in Association competition are required to wear the matching shirt of the Club the team represents.
- Proper soccer shoes in conformity with the official lawful standard are the only acceptable soccer shoes. Sneakers may be worn, but no hard-soled street shoes are permitted.
- The "home team" according to the schedule must change its uniform colors if they conflict with the "away team" colors. Pinnies may be used by the home team if needed to resolve a jersey color conflict.

#### LAW 5 REFEREES

- All games are officiated by a single referee, assigned by ARL.
- If the assigned referee fails to appear within ten minutes after scheduled game time, the teams may appoint a substitute referee by mutual agreement. Such appointment of a substitute referee shall be binding for the game. Should the assigned referee appear after a substitute has been assigned, the teams should allow the referee to officiate the game.
- All Association coaches, players and adult spectators must recognize the game leaders as the sole authority over the game. As specified under the F.I.F.A. Laws, maintaining respect for the game leader is of vital importance to successful youth soccer. Behavior which falls below this standard of respect and interferes with the game leader's ability to officiate will not be tolerated. Any incidents will be subject to review and discipline.
- ARL Referees are instructed to stop the game if, in the opinion of the referee, the referee feels a possible injury to a player has occurred. The player involved does not have to fall down or appear injured for the referee to stop the game. If the referee feels an injury to a player may have occurred, the referee will stop the game and call on the team coach to assist the injured player.
- If the referee stops the game and calls the coach on to the field, the coach is expected to speak with, and carefully observe, the player identified or suspected to have sustained any type of injury. The coach should focus his attention only to the injured player. It is recommended that the coach be very careful in allowing the player further plays as injury symptoms are often delayed.
- If a referee stops the game due to a possible head injury, that player must leave the field to be evaluated by the coach. If a concussion is suspected, the player may not reenter the game.
- If the referee stops the game due to a player being injured, that player must leave the field of play. At this time, substitutions are allowed by both teams. The injured player, after leaving the field, may return at the next allowable substitution opportunity; or if allowed to return to the field by the referee.
- The exception to the above rule is if the referee stops the game for an injured goalkeeper. After evaluating an injured goalkeeper, the coach may elect to keep the goalkeeper in the game and is not required to make a substitution. In all injury cases, coaches are recommended to err on the side of caution, and take a player off the field if an injury is suspected.
- When the apparent temperature is over 90 degrees, a 1 minute running clock break will be given by

the referee in the middle of each half (breaking the game into quarters) for players to get water.

#### LAW 6 ASSISTANT REFEREES

- Each coach (at the request of the referee) will designate one person to act as Assistant Referee (AR). At all times, the referee may overrule the AR. The AR indicates only if a ball has completely crossed the sideline or end line and shows which team has possession.

#### LAW 7 DURATION OF GAME

- The match is divided into two (2) equal halves of twenty-five (25) minutes each.
- There is a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.
- Teams switch ends of the field at half time.

#### LAW 8 THE START OF PLAY

- The winner of the coin toss gets to choose whether they want to kick off or which goal they wish to attack in the first half. If the winner of the toss chooses to kick off in the first half, the loser chooses which goal to attack, and they get to kick off to start the second half. If the winner of the coin toss chooses which goal to attack in the first half, then they will kick off to start the second half. The game begins with the ball being played from the center spot.
- Opposing players must be at least eight (8) yards away. The player taking the initial kick cannot touch the ball again until another player has touched it.
- A kick-off must move with the initial kick. A player may score directly from a kick-off.
- A dropped ball located in the penalty area is dropped uncontested for the goalkeeper. Elsewhere, it is dropped uncontested for a player of the team that last touched the ball at the point where the ball was located when play was stopped. All other players must be at least 4 yards away.

#### LAW 9 BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed over the sideline or end line, or when the game has been stopped by the referee.
- A ball going out of play over the side is restarted by a throw-in by the team not playing the ball out of bounds. FIFA rules governing the throw-in are in effect.
- A ball going out of play over the end line is played in either by a goal kick or a corner kick.

#### LAW 10 METHOD OF SCORING

- The ball must pass completely across goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar (or the height of the goal posts).

#### LAW 11 OFFSIDE

- The FIFA offside rule is in effect except for a Build Out Line addendum.
- **The Build Out Line** will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called:
  - Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the Build Out Line
  - Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the Build Out Line and goal line

#### LAW 12 FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- ARL prohibits slide tackling to challenge for a ball with an opponent. This infraction shall result in a direct free kick awarded to the other team. It will be treated as “kicks or attempts to kick an opponent” or “trips or attempts trip an opponent”. If the action is considered reckless,

with excessive force, serious foul play or violent conduct, additional sanctions, up to and including removal from the game, may be warranted.

Please note that reckless play, excessive force, serious foul play and violent conduct cannot be tolerated, whether or not they result in injury. As part of our zero tolerance policy, referees are offered these special instructions:

- At the first instance, the referee is instructed to please stop the game and counsel (not chastise) the player so that others can hear as well. Result: direct free kick.
- On the second offense, the referee will stop the game and talk to the coach. Ask the coach to produce a substitute for the player, so the coach can talk to the player privately. Result: substitution and direct free kick.
- On the third offense, the player must be removed from the game and this removal reported to the Rec Soccer Commissioner for tracking and/or further discipline. Result: substitution and direct free kick.
- **HOWEVER**, if even the first offense results in injury to an opponent or teammate, the player must be pulled from the field at least temporarily.

#### LAW 13 FREE KICKS

- Conform to FIFA rules
- Opponents must be eight (8) yards away from the ball on all free kicks.

#### LAW 14 THE PENALTY KICK

- A penalty kick is awarded if there is a foul committed by the defending team in their penalty area that results in a direct free kick.
- The penalty kick is taken from a mark ten (10) yards out from the end line, in the center of the goal. All players, other than the designated kicker, must be eight (8) yards away from and behind the ball.

#### LAW 15 THE THROW IN

A ball going out of play over the side is restarted by a throw-in by the team not playing the ball out of bounds. FIFA rules for throw-in are in effect.

#### LAW 16 THE GOAL KICK

- The defending team takes a goal kick when the attacking team touched the ball last before it went over the end line. The ball may be kicked from anywhere inside the goal area. The opposing team must retreat to behind the Build Out Line in that half of the field before a goal kick can be taken.
- The ball is in play when kicked and clearly moves – the ball does not have to leave the penalty area. Opponents must remain outside the build out line until the ball is in play.
- The defending team may take the goal kick if the opposing team has not fully retreated behind the build out line, but they do so at their own risk as the ball is in play once kicked.
- A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick.
- **Build Out Line:** The opposing team must retreat to behind the Build Out Line in that half of the field before a goal kick can be taken.

#### LAW 17 THE CORNER KICK

- The attacking team takes corner kicks when the defending team touched the ball last before it went

over the end line. Corner kicks are taken from either corner of the field, one (1) yard from the spot where the end line and sideline meet.

- Opponents must be eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is kicked.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

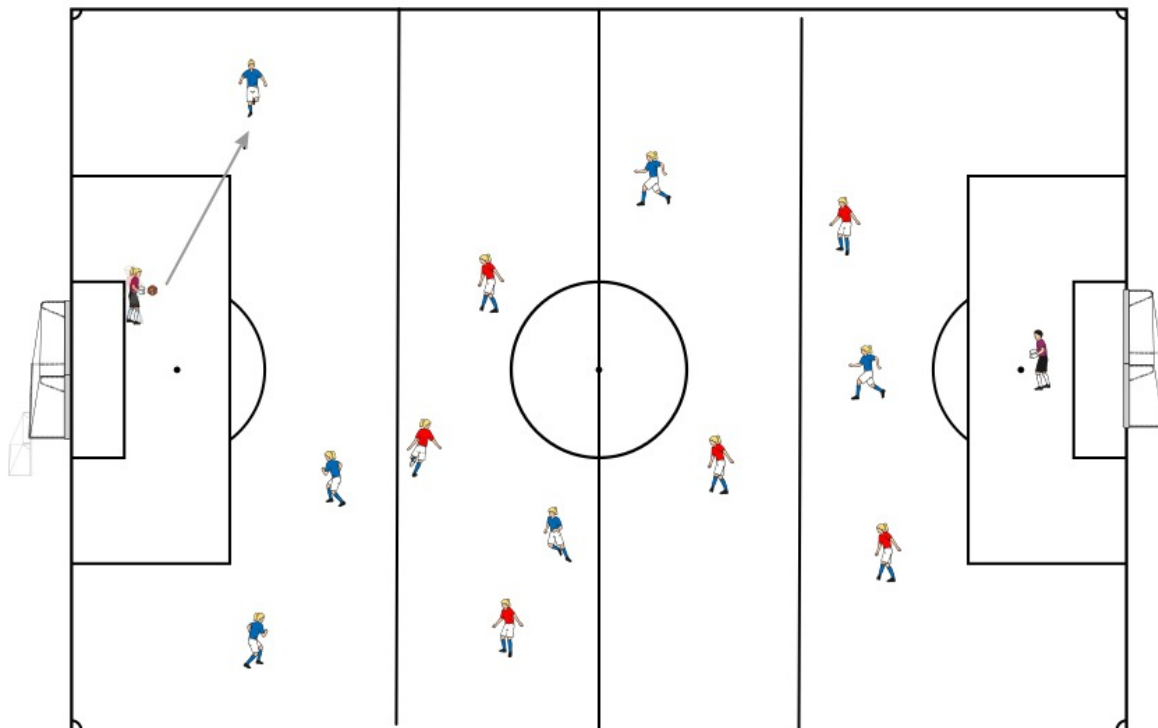
## **ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS & PHILOSOPHIES**

### **3RD AND 4TH GRADE GROUPS**

#### **BUILD OUT LINE**

- The Build Out Line is used to promote playing the ball out of the back in an unpressured setting. When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the Build Out Line. At any time the goalkeeper may pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate before the opposing team gets behind the Build Out Line, but the goalkeeper does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes. After the ball is put into play the opposing team can then cross the the Build Out Line and play resumes as normal. Goalkeepers may punt the ball, but it is encouraged that they take advantage of passing to a teammate in an unpressured setting, which the Build Out Line provides.

**Rationale:** The rationale for the Build Out Line is to encourage teams to play out of the back. By artificially creating space for the team with the ball in their defensive third of the field, it is encouraged for players and coaches to kick, roll, or throw the ball to their teammates, rather than punting the ball long.



## HEADING

- Heading is not allowed. If the ball touches a player on the head, play is stopped. If the header was deemed deliberate, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If the header was deemed unintentional, then play restarts with a dropped ball following the procedures in Law 8 – the Start and Re-Start of Play.

## TEAM ROSTER SIZE

- In the 3rd and 4th Grade groups, the ARL recommends that teams are formed with 11 players. With seven (7) players on the field, that would provide four (4) substitutes for each game.
- A player may only play in an ARL sanctioned league game if that player has been registered with the ARL and has been added to the team's official roster.

## RUNAWAY GAMES

- When a team is losing a game by four goals, it may add one (1) additional player, creating 8 v 7.
- When a team is losing a game by five (5) goals, it may add another additional player, creating 9 v 7.
- The maximum player advantage is two (2) players.
- The process is constantly adjusted depending on the score of the game.
- When the goal differential reaches six goals or more, the referee will summon opposing coaches for a meeting – the referee's role is not to arbitrate but to clarify the arrangement between the coaches, and to then continue the game. Coaches can decide to continue to play with the same players; in this case, the score will continue to fluctuate. Or teams can agree to leave the score 0-4 (the maximum allowable difference in Rec) and **come to ANY agreement** between them to continue the game: teams can swap players, can add extra goalies, or make any combination of moves to make the game more even and more enjoyable for all involved. (NOTE: the game must continue to be between registered ASA youth players; for insurance reasons, non-ASA players and/or adults cannot join.)

## TEAMS AND SPECTATOR SEATING

- Teams will set up on the same side of the field, separated by the halfway line, while the parents/spectators will be on the opposite sideline from the teams. Under no circumstances will teams or spectators be allowed to be on the sidelines in the space between the top of the penalty box to the endline, as well as behind the goals.
- All instructions from team coaches must be done from inside the team's area, which extends from the halfway line, to the top of the penalty box.

## PROFANITY

- Under no circumstances will any coach use profanity or physically or psychologically abuse any other person

## GOOD OF SOCCER

- Opposing parent/coaches and players should shake hands after each game.
- For the purpose of fostering the good of soccer and the development of all ARL players; all field players will play a roughly equal amount as all other field players in every scheduled game. Any disciplinary issues, for which a coach may wish to restrict playing time below what would be considered equal playing time, must be discussed and approved in advance with the ARL Recreational Soccer Commissioner.

### SCORE REPORTING

- Coaches will report game scores using the established procedures for the ARL Recreational league. This process will be communicated prior to each season.

### AREA CLEAN UP

- All teams shall be responsible for maintaining field areas in a clean and neat appearance, disposing of all trash prior to leaving the field.