



2025 NWISL Official Under 8 Rules

The enclosed rules and requirements are based upon modifications to the SAY SOCCER PLAYING LAWS 2022 4th Edition Revised 11/14/24 and NWISL requirements. These rules are subject to change by NWISL.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

- **Dimensions:** The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.
 - Length: **45 - 55 yds.** Width: **35 - 45 yds**
- **Field Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than 4 inches 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 five (**5**) yards is marked around it. Home and Away (Team and Spectators) should be on opposite sides of the field. Revised 11/14/24
- **The Goal Area:** The goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line **3** yards from the inside of each goal post. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of **3** yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.
- **The Penalty Area:** The penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line **9** yards from the inside of each goal post. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of **9** yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made 5 yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of five (**5**) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.
- **Build Out Line:** Shall be marked across the full width of the field between each Touchline and parallel to the Halfway line on each half of the field. The Build Out Line shall be located equidistant between the Halfway Line and the Penalty Area Line. Revised 11/14/24
- **Flag Posts:** Conform to SAY with minimum standard being at each corner of the field.
- **The Corner Arc:** 3-foot arc on each corner.
- **Goals:** Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line, consisting of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top a horizontal crossbar. The distance between the posts is **12** feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is **6 ½** feet.
- **Safety:** Goals must be securely anchored to the ground. Portable Goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball

The ball used at this age group is size (**3**) three.

Law 3 – Players

- **The Number of Players:** Two teams play a match, each fielding not more than six **(6)** players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. The minimum roster size shall be six **(6)** and the maximum roster size shall be twelve **(12)**. The teams are **not** required to play even sided. Revised 02/12/15
 - Teams and matches may be coed. Any team that roster **all girls** must be declared a **“GIRLS”** team. Any team that roster **all boys or coed** must be declared a **“BOYS”** team. The minimum number of players per team required to start a match is four **(4)**.
- **Substitutions:** Unlimited with referee permission, at any stoppage of play, **except corner kicks and free kicks**.
 - All players eligible for substitution must be marked with a pinnie. The pinnie shall be handed to the player they are coming in for. The exiting player must take the pinnie with them when leaving the field. Revised 11/14/24
- **Playing Time:** Each player shall play a minimum of fifty percent **(50%)** of the total playing time.

Law 4 – Equipment

Non-uniform clothing is allowed under uniforms based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams. Referees are required to determine the safety of non-uniform clothing and can require removal of such items.

Law 5 Referee

A USSF or SAY Licensed Referee shall be assigned to each game. In the event the assigned Referee does not show, a parent, coach, or assistant may be utilized. Revised 02/02/17

Law 6 Assistant Referees

No Assistant Referees are used in this age group.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match

The match shall be divided into two **(2)** equal halves of twenty-five **(25) minutes** each. There shall be a half time interval of five **(5) minutes**.

Law 8 The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to SAY with the exception of the following: Opponents of the team taking the kick shall be at least five **(5)** yards from the ball. Opponents of the team taking the kick do not have to be outside the buildout area for the restart of play **(except on a goal kick)**. Revised 11/14/24

Law 9 The Ball in and out of Play Revised 11/14/24

The ball is **OUT** of **PLAY** when the following happen:

1. The entire ball passes over the Goal Line or Touch Line (on the ground or in the air)
2. The game has been stopped by the Referee (including when the Referee accidentally blows the whistle)
3. The ball touches the Referee or the AR **AND**:
 - a. The ball changes direction.
 - b. The ball goes directly into the goal
 - c. The team in possession of the ball changes
 - d. A team starts a promising attack
 - i. In any of these cases; play is restarted with a dropped ball from the referee to one player of the team that was in possession before the ball hit the Referee or the AR. All other players must remain at least four **(4)** yards from the ball until play is restarted. Revised 11/14/24
 - ii. A dropped ball is considered in play as soon as it touches the ground. Revised 11/14/24

The ball **REMAINS IN PLAY** when the following happens:

1. It rebounds onto the field from the goal post, crossbar or corner flag post.
2. It touches the Referee or the AR and does not change direction.
3. There may be an apparent violation, **BUT** no signal has been given by the referee.

Law 10 The Method of Scoring

Conform to SAY

- A goal is scored when the **WHOLE BALL** passes completely over the Goal Line, between the Goal Posts and under the Crossbar.
 - A Goalkeeper may not **THROW** the ball into another team's goal
 - A goal shall not be allowed if the **WHOLE BALL** has not crossed the **ENTIRE** goal line Revised 11/14/24

Law 11 Offside

There is no offside offense called. **"Cherry Picking"** is to be managed by the coaches. The referee shall have no involvement.

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to SAY with youth modifications.

1. Slide Tackles shall not be allowed in this age group Revised 07/09/16
2. Slide Tackle where contact is made, an **IDFK** shall be awarded. A yellow or red card **may** also be issued based on the **referee 's opinion**. Revised 01/28/17
3. A deliberate heading of the ball shall not be allowed in this age group. Revised 07/09/16

IFK can only be awarded for fouls and misconduct that happen while the ball is in play.

- IFK is awarded for the following:
 - A player kicks (or attempts to kick)
 - An opponent
 - The ball while in the GK's possession
 - Strikes (or attempts to strike) an opponent
 - The GK throws the ball vigorously at an opponent
 - A GK pushing an opponent with the ball while still holding it
 - Trips (or attempts to trip) an opponent
 - Jumps at an opponent
 - Charges an opponent
 - Pushes an opponent
 - When tackling, or challenging an opponent to gain possession of the ball; makes contact with the opponent:
 - Before making contact with the ball
 - On any tackle or challenge made from outside the peripheral vision of the opponent, even if contact is made with the ball first.
 - Holds an opponent
 - Bites or spits at anyone
 - Obstructs an opponent with contact
 - Throws or kicks an object at the ball, an opponent, or the match officials
 - Contacts the ball with any held object (including the GK)
 - Handles the ball (This does not apply to a GK within their own penalty area)
 - Not every touch with a player's hand / arm is an offense. It must be purposeful.
 - Dangerous Play
 - High Kicks
 - Double Kicks (Scissors or Bicycle) in distance of another player
 - Low headers (below the waist of another player)
 - Playing the ball from the ground
 - Heading the Ball deliberately
 - Slide tackling
 - Charging unfairly
 - Each player must have at least one foot on the ground when shoulder to shoulder contact is made.
 - The ball must be within playing distance of the involved players when shoulder to shoulder contact is made.
 - Obstruction
 - Fouls against the GK
 - Note: A GK has possession of the ball when they have any part of **ONE (1)** hand or arm is on it, whether it be trapped on the ground, another body part, or the goal post. This also includes holding the ball in an outstretched open palm.
 - Improper clearing of the ball by the GK Revised 11/15/24

Law 13 Free Kick

Conform to SAY with the exception that all opponents are at least five (5) yards from the ball. All free kicks are to be **Indirect Free Kick**, irrelevant of the type of foul called. **On all kicks, the ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.** Revised 02/09/20

Law 14 Penalty Kick:

There are no P/K's. Award Indirect Free Kick. Players must be five (**5**) yards away from the ball. Ball is not in play until it crosses the penalty area line (leaves the penalty area).

Law 15 Throw-In

Conform to SAY

1. The throw-in is taken in any direction at the point where the ball left the field by a member of the opposing team.
2. The thrower **MUST**:
 - a. Face the field of play with part of each foot either;
 - i. On the touchline
 - ii. On the ground outside the touchline and
 1. Part of each foot **MUST** remain on the ground at the time of release.
 - b. Throw the ball with both hands
 - c. Throw the ball from behind and over their head.
 - d. Not touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player
- All opposing players must remain at least two (**2**) yards away from the thrower of the ball until the ball is in play. Revised 11/14/24

Law 16 Goal Kick

Conform to SAY

1. Opponents are required to be in their half of the field prior to the taking of a goal kick. Opponents cannot be in the defenders (goalkeeper's) half of the field at the taking of the goal kick. Revised 01/29/17
2. If a properly taken goal kick is taken while opponents are in the goalkeeper's half of the field or encroach before the ball clears the penalty area, the goal kick is retaken. Revised 01/29/17
3. A goal on the opposing team **CAN** be scored directly from a goal kick. Revised 11/14/24

Law 17 Corner Kick

Conform to SAY with the exception that all opponents remain at least five (**5**) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 18 Punting by the Goalkeeper Revised 11/14/24

Punting is allowed in the U8 division.