

# LAWS OF THE GAME

## U5 thru U8

Here are the basic Laws of the Game (not Rules) that a referee bases his/her decisions from. The Law Book is only about a 35 page small handbook. It is the framework and how to apply the laws is found throughout many documents from USSF and FIFA. The main document used by referees is Advice to Referees. This document is > 96 8 x 11 inch pages. Obviously recreational soccer is refereed differently from a pro game. Even within recreational, the Laws are applied differently by age and ability. For this age group, the intent is to allow them to learn the game and have as many touches on the ball as possible.

This handout will cover a lot of situations where the referee uses his/her discretion in applying some of the Laws. The goal of this handout is to help you, the coach, to see things from the referee's viewpoint and understand why a call may be made or may not be called. We referees do not want to turn the game into a whistle fest, but we do understand player safety is our first goal. It is BISA's aim to have coach and the referees work together. Please realize a referee does not "owe" you an explanation for a call. Most will be willing to give a quick response, if asked politely, but will not enter into a debate over the call or lack of calls. No one can change a referee's call except the referee and it must be done prior to the game restarting. Most referees who do this age group are our youngest and they are still learning the job. Please refrain from eating the referee, do not approach the referee after the game to discuss calls. This age group does **NOT** keep score (officially) so a blown call should not be blown out of proportion!

Law I	Field of play: 20 x 30 yards for U5/6/7 and 25 x 35 yards for U8
Law II	The ball: size 3
Law III	Number of players: U5/6/7/8 is 4 (minimum of 3). There are <b>NO goalkeepers</b> . You may position a defender <u>outside</u> the large area till play comes into your half of the field. <b>ALL</b> players must play 50% of the game. Substitutions are made only at the quarter unless there is an injury or a player initiated situation in U5/6/7. U8 plays halves and may substitute on your throw in (not the opponents), after a goal is scored, and on either team's goal kick.
Law IV	Player's Equipment: uniforms, shin guards under the socks, and NO jewelry-includes ear rings!!!!
Laws V/VI	The Referee & Ass't Referee: outlines the duties of each. This age group only has one referee who must cover the entire field. They may miss things as they move with the herd of players.
Law VII	Duration of the match: U5/6 8 minute quarters, U7 10 minute quarters, and U8 22 minute halves.
Law VIII	Start of Play and restart: Each half started with kick offs. 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter will restart in U5/6/7 with where play stopped at the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter. Free kicks restart play after a foul and drop balls restart play when there is no clear reason to give a free kick after play was stopped.
Law IX	Ball in and out of play: The ball must be wholly over the goal line or touchline to be out.
Law X	Method of scoring: The ball must completely cross the goal line.
Law XI	Offside: Does not apply to this age group.
Law XII	Fouls and Misconduct: direct kicks* and indirect kicks +. At this age, all kicks will be indirect kicks, which means the ball must be touched by another player before it goes into the goal. This includes kick offs, corner kicks, and goal kicks. +Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent-player not playing the ball results in this call. +Trips or attempts to trip an opponent- player not playing the ball results in this call. +Jumps at an opponent-jumps into player and is not playing the ball results in this call. +Charges an opponent-runs into player whether has ball or not +Strikes or attempt to strike an opponent-self-explanatory. This will result in the player being taken over to the coach and replaced. Re-entry in the next quarter may be allowed. +Pushes an opponent- <b>pushing is extending the arm with force</b> . As you watch soccer, you will see players with arms out & touching an opponent, but are not forcing the player away from the

ball. Usually it is both players doing it to each other so how do you call that? The referee will usually try to talk with the players while play is going on.

+Tackles an opponent-takes out a player without playing the ball or after the ball is gone, plays the player. Players are clumsy at this age.

+Spits at an opponent- self-explanatory. Can be your own teammate. This will result in the player being taken over to the coach and replaced. Re-entry in the next quarter may be allowed

+Holds an opponent-grabbing and holding jersey, shorts, or body part.

+Handles the ball deliberately-this means the player **plays the ball** with any part of the arm from the shoulder down to the hand. If the ball is kicked into the player's arm/hand, this is not called. Think this way, ball to hand-no call, but hand to ball-will be called. But it is the referee's discretion.

+GK- holding ball > 6 seconds, 2 touch (picks up the ball after having released the ball from possession), picks up ball thrown to the GK by teammate or picks up a ball deliberately kicked to the GK by a teammate. Applies to U7/8 only.

+Playing in a dangerous manner-known by most as "high kick" or playing the ball on the ground. Again this is the discretion of the referee if it put a player in danger.

+Impedes progress of opponent-gets in front of a player to stop them from getting to a ball and the ball is not within playing distance-again referee discretion.

+Prevents GK from releasing the ball-stands in front of the GK or keeps moving in front of the GK to keep them from kicking or throwing the ball. Applies only to U8.

Law XIII Free Kick: how to handle indirect kicks. This directs the referee on the restart. The referee will move players back 3 yards for any kick.

Law XIV Penalty Kick: not used at this age

Law XV Throw-In: proper procedure-the ball must come from behind the head, feet outside the playing field (one foot on the line with part of it outside the field is a good throw) and both feet on the ground at the time of the release of the ball. If the player does an improper throw, the referee will allow 1 redo. If it is improper again, play continues.

Law XVI Goal Kick: proper procedure-the ball is not live till it clears the large area and must be kicked from within the small area

Law XVII Corner Kick: proper procedure-ball must be inside the arc and move forward-not just touched.

Referees are a necessary part of the game. Through the use of our presence, our voice, and our whistle is how a referee controls the game. The referee is much closer to the play and may see the play differently from the sideline view. The coach and the sidelines' behavior can be a negative influence on the players and how they play. When the sidelines get loud, it influences the players. Help your referee by controlling your behavior and your sidelines. It is about the players. They just want to have fun and not get yelled at. Please accent the positives they do and let them learn from their mistakes. They know they did not do it right.

Feel free to email the Referee Director any questions (currently is [ginny.ciriot@bisasoccer.com](mailto:ginny.ciriot@bisasoccer.com)) or ask her/him at the field if they are not working a game or assisting in training. Just realize that no board member can change a referee's call and neither can the referee if play has resumed.

**REMINDER:** Heading the ball is no longer allowed in this age group. If the referee determines it was an intentional heading, a call will be made. The other team will be given a kick.