

# Gulf Coast Soccer

## Modified Laws of the Game



### U7/U8 Playing Rules

The U8 Field will be slightly larger than the Micro field (35x25 yards up to 40x30 yards), but will be the same otherwise. Markings will only include touchlines, goal lines, and a halfway line, and a 4x6 foot goal will be centered at each end.

Teams play 4v4, and there are no goalkeepers. Players use a Size 3 ball. The home team on the schedule wears the white jersey, and the away team wears the dark jersey. The jersey should be tucked in to the uniform shorts. Players must wear shinguards under their uniform socks, and can not wear jewelry of any kind.

Games are organized into four (4) quarters of ten (10) minutes each. Teams take a quick break (of just 1-2 minutes) between the first and second quarter, and again between the third and fourth quarter. The teams take a longer break (of 5 minutes) at the halftime, and switch directions at the half.

We will attempt to have a center referee assigned to each match. However, if no referee is available, the team coaches are responsible for managing the game (from the team area) and ensuring players are experiencing a safe and positive playing environment. Alternately, a volunteer referee may be requested from the spectators. Coaches should not be inside the playing field unless the referee has given permission to enter the field to assist a player. All spectators must stay on the touchline opposite the team benches; only authorized adults (with their KidSafe passes) and rostered players are permitted in the team area. Spectators are not permitted within 5 yards behind the goal lines or goals, and anyone who shouts instructions to players from behind the goal lines will be required to leave the area.

Substitutions may be made at any stoppage of play, and should be done as quickly as possible to minimize disruption to the game. All players are entitled to play at least 50% of the game, except in the instances of injury or documented discipline issues. Any discipline suspensions must be communicated in advance to the player and player's parents. If a discipline-related suspension is sought for more than one game per season, it must be approved in advance by the Program Director.

Fouls and misconduct will be enforced according to the Laws of the Game with the following modifications. Kick-offs, throw-ins, goal kicks, corner kicks, and indirect free kicks will be used to restart play as appropriate. No penalty kicks or direct free kicks will be awarded at this age group, and the offside law will not be in effect.

For goal kicks, the ball will be placed within 3 yards of the goal (but does not have to be placed on the goal line itself). All opposing players must retreat behind the halfway line and remain there until the ball has been kicked. For all other restarts, the opposing players must be at least 10 feet away from the ball until it has been kicked.

At this level, fouls are not common, but will begin to occur (generally due to a lack of motor control, emotional control, or both). In the event that players are fouling other players, the referee will explain the reason for calling a foul to the players to help educate them on proper game conduct. If player misconduct continues, the coach should remove the player from the game until he/she is able to resume play in an appropriate manner.

We do not keep standings at this age group. However, if a game has clearly become "non-competitive" such that one team is scoring goals freely and the other is getting very few touches on the ball, then the coaches should "shuffle" players (at the next quarter break) between the two teams to make two balanced squads for the duration of the match. Players are expected to bring both their home and away jerseys to all games to facilitate this kind of "re-shuffling" between teams. After the game has concluded, the coaches should also notify the appropriate Program Director about the non-competitive match, and the Program Director may choose to change one or more team rosters to improve the quality of future matches for all participating teams. A "non-competitive" match is defined as one that has a goal difference of 6 or more goals.