



## U10 GUIDELINES

*(These meet AYSO National's U10 Guidelines – and exceed it with regards to playing time.)  
Rev. October 16, 2008*

Just a few points for coaches, referees & parents to remember, especially for those who have experience in other divisions, as to how U10 differs from the standard *Laws of the Game*. When not mentioned here, the standard *Laws of the Game* applies.

1. **Duration of game** is fifty minutes and is played in 2 twenty-five-minute halves with substitutions allowed approximately 12 ½ minutes into each half. Play should be stopped during a normal stoppage in play. Be aware that the game clock does not stop during substitution breaks. Coaches should keep their players on the pitch and be prepared in advance to make substitutions quickly and efficiently. While it is fine for players to get a drink during substitution breaks, this is not half-time: snacks should not be handed out at this time. The half-time break is 5-10 minutes. Due to lack of substitutes or hot weather, the referees may use their discretion to allow for a short break at any time during the game for players to get a drink.
2. **Goal kicks** are taken from the goal area (the little box). The ball is not in play and cannot be touched or played by either team until it goes beyond the penalty area (the big box) in U-10 and older games.
3. **Throw-Ins:** Second chances are not given for improper throw-ins for U10 and older players. An improper throw-in results in a throw-in for the opposing team. The referee must judge if indeed the throw-in violated the spirit of the Throw-in Law or if the violation was trifling and not worthy of stopping play. Keep the game moving and minimize unnecessary interruptions.
4. **Fouls:** No slide tackles are allowed. Referees should not stop play for trifling violations. It's a player's game so keep the fun going and let them play. But always stop for safety.
5. **Misconduct:** Referees will work cooperatively with the coaches and eliminate the need for cautions and send-offs. (Referees should leave their red and yellow cards home).
6. **Distance from Ball:** Players need to stand back approximately 10 yards from the ball being kicked (for free kicks, goal kicks, kick-offs, etc.) to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent.

7. **Offside** – standard rules apply.
8. **Playing time:** 3/4 rule applies to all players on the team (no one plays the entire game unless everyone else has played 3 quarters). No one should play goalkeeper for more than half the game. Any player that does play two quarters in goals must also play the other two quarters on the field.
9. **Score** is publicly acknowledged in U10. No slaughter rule applies (leading team must pull back to keep score within 5 goals). Penalties will be assessed to teams violating this policy.
10. **Play 7 vs. 7 with goalkeepers.** If the opposing team has fewer than 7 players then you may, at your option, choose to play down (play the same number of players). However, there should never be more than 2 subs. If a team does not have a minimum of 5 players at the start of the game (allowing a 5 minute grace period) or does not maintain a minimum of 5 players, then it will forfeit the game. A 0-1 forfeit loss will be assigned to the forfeiting team. Once the decision is made regarding the official outcome, a “friendly” game is played, where the outcome has no bearing on standings, but is played simply for the enjoyment of playing. Coaches are encouraged to “lend” players to the opposing team to field the proper number of players in a friendly match. Never play more than 7v7. *(See AYSO’s philosophy on short-sided games & the benefit to the players.)*

### **OTHER NOTES/COMMENTS:**

**Referees** should briefly explain any infringements to ALL the players and help players with instructions. They are the teachers on the field – and should encourage proper play and sporting behavior. Every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.

**Referees** must be registered AYSO volunteers (*meaning completion of safe haven and eAYSO volunteer background check*) & Certified with Basic Referee Training or higher (*see How to Become an SM AYSO Referee on the Referee section of our website.*) Assistant Referees work each sideline and assist the Center Referee with calling the ball in and out of play.

Referees in U10 do not referee their own children’s game, but are scheduled for other games in the division. The home team is responsible for providing a three-person referee team for the U10 game immediately preceding theirs on the same field. The home team for the first match of the day is responsible for providing a three-person referee team for the LAST U10 game played on the same field that day. If a referee from the home team is unavailable, they are responsible for providing a substitute referee.

**EFFECTIVE OCT 8, 2008: A 0-1 forfeit loss will be assigned to any team that fails to provide their referee team (or a substitute team) when scheduled to do so.**

A “friendly” game may be played, where the outcome has no bearing on standings.

**A team that forfeits 3 games due to failing to provide a referee team will be ineligible for the playoffs.**

**Coaches** should utilize positive coaching skills (avoid constant coaching, no yelling at players), stay within the designated technical area (coach's box), show respectful attitude toward the referees and HAVE FUN!

**Spectators** from each team should be on opposite sides of the field. The home team is the second team listed on the game schedule and sits on the East or North side of the field. The visiting team is the first team listed on the game schedule and is assigned the West or South side of the field. Traditionally, the spectators are to stay between the 18-yard lines (between the penalty areas). Spectators also need to remain at least 1 yard back from the touchline, maintaining an unobstructed and safe area for the Assistant Referee and players to run and perform throw-ins. A spectator should never sit or stand behind the goal or goal line. Coaches & assistant referees should encourage this. Avoid coaching players (*coaches coach, players play, parents cheer*), no foul or abusive language or gestures toward any player, coach, referee or other spectators, abide by the Kids Zone guidelines (no smoking, no consumption of alcohol, no dogs, etc.), acknowledge and congratulate BOTH teams on a game well played, and HAVE FUN! Team Managers should help ensure proper sideline etiquette.

**You have your field for your specified slot only.** If you start late, or take a long half-time break, please make-up that time somehow so you still end on time as a courtesy to all the parents who have games after you. As the official timekeepers, this is the Referee's responsibility. However, if the Referee feels s/he has too much going on to keep track of time, select someone to be the timekeeper.

**Coin toss:** The “Home team” makes the call; either “heads or tails” in the air. If the call is correct the home team decides what end they will defend. If the call is incorrect then the “Visiting team” decides what end they will defend. Losing the coin toss means you kick off first. Coaches should prepare their captains on what end to choose to defend first.

**Ball Size** is size 4.

**Game Cards:** Game cards are to be completed by each Coach or Team Manager prior to the start of game warm-ups. To complete the game card, coaches must write the full name and number of each player on the team in order of uniform number and give the game card to the Center Referee before the start of the game. Absences, substitutions, goalkeeper playing time & goals are all noted by the Referee during the game. Again, the Referee can delegate this role to an Assistant Referee if s/he needs assistance. The Referee signs the completed game cards and deposits them in the Game Card box, or as per the Division Commissioner's instructions.

**Field Set-Up** is the responsibility of all the teams with the first game. Please arrive early to complete this task in time for the players to practice with the goals. Each field has 2 goals & nets, plus 6 flags – 4 on each of the corners, and 1 each at the half-way line, about a yard away from the edge of the field (touchline). Stakes are used to secure the goals in the ground & net hooks keep the net taut. Additionally, the Game Card box and Kids Zone sign needs to be placed in a visible location.

**Field Take-Down** is the responsibility of the teams with the last game on that field. Sometimes, one field may end earlier than another, so be sure to check if yours is the last game for that field. All field equipment needs to be returned to the storage room, along with the Game Card box and Kids Zone sign. Please ensure all stakes & net hooks are accounted for, so they are not found by children afterwards. The correct number of stakes & hooks are noted on the toolbox in which they are stored. Please also pick-up any trash or recycling.

**No other changes from play as specified in FIFA *Laws of the Game*.**

See the Coaches section or the Referee section of our website to download a copy of the AYSO Edition of the FIFA *Laws of the Game*.

Thanks for your help and cooperation in making this an enjoyable experience for all the children!