



National Rules  
And Regulations  
2008-2009

**AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
NATIONAL SUPPORT & TRAINING CENTER  
12501 S Isis Avenue, Hawthorne, CA 90250 (800) USA-AYSO**

**AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION (AYSO)**  
**NATIONAL RULES & REGULATIONS**  
**2008-2009**

**I. GAME CONDUCT**

AYSO games shall be conducted in accordance with the current FIFA *Laws of the Game* and decisions of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) in effect on August 1 each calendar year, with the following exceptions and clarifications:

**A. COMPETITION**

1. Coaches, officials and spectators shall not enter the field of play unless requested by the referee.
2. Except for short-sided games (Article I.H), a scheduled game shall not commence nor be continued unless both teams can field at least seven eligible players.

**B. DURATION OF GAMES**

1. Games shall be of two equal halves, not to exceed the following maximum durations:

<b>Division</b>	<b>Maximum Duration of Half</b>
U-5	10 minutes
U-6	10 minutes
U-8	20 minutes
U-10	25 minutes
U-12	30 minutes
U-14	35 minutes
U-16	40 minutes
U-19	45 minutes

2. Half-time periods shall be a minimum of five and a maximum of ten minutes as designated by the referee.
3. Where necessary due to scheduling time constraints, the duration of the two halves is to be reduced by an equal amount to allow for substitution in accordance with Article I.C.1.

**C. PLAYING TIME AND SUBSTITUTION**

1. Except as noted in Article I.C.3 all eligible team members in attendance at AYSO games must play at least half of the game, excluding overtime.

Such participation is controlled as follows:

- a. Approximately midway through each half the referee shall permit substitution. This normally occurs during a regular stoppage in play, and the game is resumed with the appropriate restart (i.e. throw-in, goal kick, corner kick, kick-off, free kick, penalty kick or dropped ball). On occasion the referee may need to stop play for substitution while the ball is in play, in which case the game is resumed with a dropped ball.
  - b. Substitutions may also be made at half-time and at the start of any overtime periods.
  - c. When the referee signals for substitution, the coaches should have all substitutes entering the game immediately report to the referee or the designated assistant referees, who shall note on the lineup cards those team members substituting.
  - d. During such stoppages, the coach of each team may substitute as many team members, or none, including previously substituted team members, as long as all eligible team members meet the minimum playing requirements.
  - e. The referee shall allow for any time lost due to substitution or other cause by stopping his/her watch or adding playing time. (See Article I.B.3. regarding reducing the length of halves to permit proper substitution.)
2. Substitution for injury:
    - a. If a player is injured, the coach may provide a substitute for the player, in which case the injured player may not return until the beginning of the next "quarter". Only the player who is injured is credited with a "quarter" played regardless of the actual time played.
    - b. The coach may choose to not substitute and "play short" thereby allowing the injured player to return during the "quarter" in which he or she was injured.
    - c. The player must receive a signal from the referee in order to return to the game.
  3. Late arriving team members shall be substituted as follows:
    - a. If the team member arrives during the first "quarter", the team member must play a minimum of two of the remaining three "quarters".
    - b. If the team member arrives during the second or third "quarter", the team member must play a minimum of one "quarter".
  4. Signed lineup cards must be completed by the referee and forwarded to the regional commissioner or his/her designee.

#### **D. OFFICIATING**

1. Referees shall officiate in accordance with the AYSO Rules & Regulations (the rules of competition), the FIFA *Laws of the Game* and decisions of the IFAB.
2. Referees shall officiate in a manner inducing clean competition and good sportsmanship, placing great emphasis on the welfare of the players. If a player is injured, the referee, at his/her discretion, may stop play to ensure the welfare of the player even if the ball has not gone out of play.
3. The goalkeeper shall not be harassed or interfered with while attempting to put the ball in play.
4. It is the duty of referees to protect the goalkeeper against dangerous play.

5. The *Laws of the Game* are intended to provide that games should be played with as little interference as possible, and in this view it is the duty of referees to penalize only deliberate breaches of the Law. Constant whistling for trifling and doubtful breaches produces bad feeling and loss of temper on the part of the players and spoils the pleasure of spectators.

**E. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES, REFEREES AND OFFICIALS**

1. It shall be the duty of each coach, referee, and official to:
  - a. Conduct himself/herself in a manner becoming a member of AYSO.
  - b. Comply with the AYSO Rules & Regulations.
  - c. Encourage clean competition and good sportsmanship.
  - d. Prohibit negative comments and complaints about officiating.
  - e. Present a healthy, athletic environment for team members by neither consuming alcoholic beverages nor using tobacco products during practices or games or in the immediate vicinity of the soccer fields.
2. It shall also be the duty of each coach to:
  - a. Train and coach his/her team to the best of his/her ability.
  - b. Remain within the coaches' area (Article I.G.2) during the game; a maximum of two coaches is permitted for each team.
  - c. Limit his/her sideline participation during AYSO games to comments that are positive, instructional, and/or encouraging.
  - d. Upon team formation, and during all subsequent team gatherings, practices, scrimmages, and games (regional, inter-regional, area, sectional, national and tournaments), have in his/her possession a signed Player Registration Form for each team member.

**F. SIZE OF BALL**

Ball size for each division shall be as follows:

Age Division	Size	Circumference	Weight
U-5, U-6 & U-8	3	23.0-25.0 inches	10-12 oz.
U-10 & U-12	4	25.0-26.5 inches	12-14 oz.
U-14, U-16 & U-19	5	26.5-28.0 inches	14-16 oz.

**G. FIELD OF PLAY**

1. The dimensions and markings of the field of play and goals shall be at the discretion of the region and, whenever possible, conform to the *FIFA Laws of the Game* or to AYSO short-sided game requirements.

2. A coaches' area extending ten yards on each side of the halfway line shall be marked by two lines off the field of play and perpendicular to the touch line. Where possible, the coaches' area shall include two additional lines, with one line parallel to and at least one yard from the touch line, and a second parallel line no more than three yards from the touch line.
3. The field shall be marked, where possible, with a spectator control line parallel to the touch line at a distance of at least three yards from the touch line. Coaches and officials should help the assistant referees keep spectators behind the spectator control line.
4. Spectators shall not be allowed behind the goal lines, with the exception of photographers who have received authorization from the referee, and who must remain quiet and sufficiently back from the goal lines.

#### H. SHORT-SIDED GAMES

1. It is strongly recommended that U-5 through U-12 divisions play short-sided games, conducted in accordance with the current FIFA *Laws of the Game* as modified by the AYSO National Rules and Regulations and the age appropriate AYSO Coaching Manual.

**Regions may choose to allow goalkeepers in the U-8 division.**

**Coaches beginning at the U-10 division are allowed to teach team members how to properly head the ball.**

2. Short-sided games are permitted for all divisions.

#### II. TEAMS

- A. Team names shall bear no resemblance to a religion, race, ethnicity or nationality.
- B. Teams shall participate only in games approved by their respective regional commissioners and/or presiding AYSO governing authority.
- C. Team size:
  1. For full-sided (11-a-side) soccer (not recommended for U-12 and younger), the number of team members at any one time shall be:

<b>Age Division</b>	<b>Maximum no. of team members</b>	<b>Minimum no. of team members</b>
U-16 & U-19	18	12
U-8 through U-14	15	12

2. The following are the recommended team sizes:

Age Division	Players per team on field	Maximum no. of team members	Minimum no. of team members
U-19	11-a-side	18	12
U-16	11-a-side	18	12
U-14	11-a-side	15	12
U-12	9-a-side	12	9
U-10	7-a-side	10	7
U-8	5-a-side (No goalkeepers)	7	5
U-6	3-a-side (No goalkeepers)	5	3
U-5	3-a-side (No goalkeepers)	4	3

3. All divisions may play optionally with teams of smaller sizes for mini-soccer, indoor soccer or short-sided games, subject to rules established by the section.

- D. The maximum number of team members listed in Article II.C may be increased with approval of the area director, but no more than would allow each team member to play at least half of each game.
- E. Each primary season, every effort shall be made to balance team strengths within each age division, within a reasonable geographical area.
- F. A region or area shall not form leagues on a major and minor basis within any age division.
- G. The only team member(s) a head coach may specify be on his/her team is his/her own child or children.

### III. REGISTRATION

A. The standard age divisions for the Boys and Girls programs are as follows:

Age	Division
Under 5 years but not younger than 4 years	U-5
Under 6 years	U-6
Under 8 years	U-8
Under 10 years	U-10
Under 12 years	U-12
Under 14 years	U-14
Under 16 years	U-16
Under 19 years	U-19

- B. The effective date of age determination shall be the registrant's age as of July 31<sup>st</sup> immediately prior to the start of the membership year as defined in Article V.

Registrants who have reached the age of four years as of this date are eligible to participate in the program.

Individuals who are nineteen years of age or older as of this date are not eligible to participate.

1. **Exception: Regions, upon approval by their section director, may allow registration and participation of children who have reached the age of four as of the date of the region's first organized activity (camp, practice or game) in any season, split season or sub-season.**

- C. U-5 and U-6 divisions are primarily for the introduction of soccer skills.
- D. In regions where there are not enough registrants to make any or all standard age divisions, divisions may be combined so that teams may be formed.

Such divisions shall be classified on the basis of the oldest registrant and shall not, after the start of the season of play, be reclassified to a lower age division should the oldest registrant(s) then be removed from the roster.

- E. Regions with a sufficient number of registrants within a standard age division may, with the approval of the area director and section director, form single-year sub-divisions within the standard age divisions defined in Article III.A.
- F. No potential team member may register without the written consent of his/her parent or guardian, unless the registrant is of legal age.
- G. A registrant becomes an official team member upon:
1. payment to the region of its required registration fee, and
  2. acceptance of his/her registration form by the regional commissioner or the regional commissioner's designated representative, and
  3. placement on a team by the regional commissioner or the regional commissioner's designated representative.
- H. The regional commissioner is responsible for assuring the eligibility of all team members on teams within the region. Upon request of the regional commissioner or area director, a team member must present his/her birth certificate or other legal proof of age.
- I. An individual team member is limited to one AYSO primary season team.
- J. Boys and girls may play on the same teams where there is an insufficient number of registrants to establish separate teams with reasonable application of Article III.D. It is strongly recommended, however, that separate boys and girls teams be instituted and maintained wherever possible.

#### IV. TRANSFER OF TEAM MEMBERS

A team member may transfer from one team to another within a region, or from one region to another, after the following three conditions have been met:

- A. Approval of both coaches of the teams involved.

- B. Approval of regional commissioner(s).
- C. Approval of team member and parent/guardian; parent/guardian approval is not required if team member is of legal age.

#### V. DURATION OF REGISTRATION

The period of official membership shall be from August 1<sup>st</sup> through the following July 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

#### VI. PROPER DRESS

- A. Each chartered AYSO region shall provide for team members to wear a matching team uniform consisting of a jersey, shorts and socks. Such uniform shall be properly marked with the AYSO Traditional logo, described in **Exhibit "A"** of these Rules and Regulations, approximately three to four inches in height located on the upper left front of the jersey, and otherwise shall conform to the markings on **Exhibit "A."**

The AYSO Traditional logo is not required on goalkeepers' jerseys but is highly recommended.

A pilot region may use non-conforming uniforms which were purchased prior to the program becoming a pilot for their useful life but no longer than three years from the date of admission of the pilot region.

- B. The AYSO uniform may bear a manufacturer's name and/or logo. The manufacturer's name and/or logo must not be displayed more prominently or be larger than the AYSO Traditional logo nor be placed in an area other than specified in **Exhibit "A."** In no event shall a manufacturer's name and/or logo appear in the area designated for the AYSO Traditional logo. No other markings may appear on the uniform without the prior approval of the National Board of Directors.
- C. The AYSO uniform may bear an optional emblem representing region, skills, sponsor or sportsmanship on the upper right sleeve and/or the lower right front of the shorts in accordance with **Exhibit "A."** Such emblems shall be no more than three inches in diameter (or equivalent diagonal) and shall be approved by the regional commissioner.
- D. The AYSO uniform may also bear a sponsor emblem designated by the AYSO National Board of Directors immediately below the AYSO logo on the left breast of the jersey or such other location as the National Board of Directors may determine, as illustrated in **Exhibit "A."**
- E. No AYSO uniform may bear a team member's name, or team name, league name, or program name.
- F. The team member's uniform number shall appear on the back of the jersey in a color that contrasts with the jersey color, and (optionally) may be placed on the front of the uniform below the standard manufacturer's name and/or logo on the jersey or on the left side of the shorts. The number on the front of the uniform shall not exceed four inches in height.
- G. The AYSO Traditional logo must appear in a color that contrasts with the player's primary uniform color. The AYSO Traditional logo must have a prominent appearance on the uniform.
- H. No person may use any of the AYSO trade names, trademarks or logos for any use other than AYSO-authorized activities without the prior written consent of the NSTC. This includes having the AYSO Traditional logo stamped on soccer balls, soccer shoes or other equipment, or used in association with the products or services of any person. Those types of activities weaken any national licensing program and may violate license agreements then in force. Any approved use shall require that an ® should be placed next to the AYSO registered trade name or trademark or, if the trade name is not registered, a ™ should be placed next to such trade name or trademark. These symbols serve notice that the trade names and trademarks belong to AYSO.

- I. Regulation soccer shoes, gym shoes, or sneakers (with or without cleats) are permissible in all AYSO competitions subject to the referee's approval regarding their safety.
- J. Team members must wear shinguards that provide a reasonable degree of protection, and that are completely covered by their socks, to participate in any practice or game.
- K. Team members shall not be allowed to practice or participate in any game with any type of cast or splint. Removal of any type of cast or splint at the field or surrounding area in order to participate shall disqualify the team member from practice or game participation.
- L. Players shall not wear anything that is dangerous to either themselves or other players.

**VII. OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY OF UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

The custodianship and disposition of equipment and supplies purchased by an individual region shall be the responsibility of that region.

**VIII. INCIDENTS AND INJURIES**

All incidents, injuries or property damage involving an AYSO participant or occurring at an AYSO event shall be reported to, and by, the regional commissioner or safety director on the AYSO Incident Report Form in accordance with the directive of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) National Support & Training Center (NSTC).

## Exhibit "A"

3" or 4" AYSO Traditional logo on upper left front of jersey. Logo color must contrast with jersey color per Article VI.A.

Optional national sponsor logo as approved by the AYSO National Board of Directors.

Optional emblem (region, skills, sponsor or sportsmanship) on upper right sleeve and/or lower right front of shorts – no more than 3' in diameter or equivalent diagonal per Article VI.C



Number on back of jersey and (optionally) on right front of jersey or left front of shorts. Number color must contrast with jersey color per Article VI.F. (Optional numbers on front of uniform not to exceed 4" in height.)

Optional standard manufacturer's name and/or logo per Article VI.B.

Optional sleeve design is allowed.

Shinguards worn on both legs, completely covered by the socks per Article VI.J.

### NOTES:

1. The AYSO Traditional logo shall be worn on the left front of the jersey.
2. Except as indicated in Article VI and in the drawing, no other markings may appear without the prior approval of the National Board of Directors.
3. For clarification of proper application of AYSO and manufacturers' logos, refer to the AYSO National Rules and Regulations Article VI.
4. The AYSO Traditional logo is not required on goalkeepers' jerseys but is highly recommended.