

# Rules and Modifications for OBGC House Soccer (U10 and up) – Boys and Girls

In any case where a modification is not specified, standard FIFA rules apply

## NEW, BEGINNING IN FALL 2019:-

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As previously observed, during regular season games no player may play more than half the game as goalkeeper. However, **during playoff games a single player may play any amount of time deemed necessary as keeper.**

Per the new FIFA ruling, a goal kick no longer needs to clear the penalty area before the defending team may touch it. The attacking team must remain outside this area, until it is touched by a player other than the goalkeeper. The rules for the Build-out Line are unchanged by this new law.

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## Field of Play

All U10 and U12 games (boys and girls) will be played on Fields #1 and #2 at the OBGC Park and lined as appropriate for an 8v8 or 9v9 game. All U14 games (boys and girls) will be played on Fields #3 and #4 at the OBGC Park and lined as appropriate for an 11v11 game. In the unlikely event another field must be used, that field will be lined as appropriate for the age group.

## Ball Size

U10 and U12 leagues (boys and girls) will use size 4 balls; U14 leagues (boys and girls) will use size 5 balls

## Players

U10 (boys and girls) will have a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 8 players on the field at a time; U12 leagues (boys and girls) a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 9; U14 leagues (boys and girls) will have a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 11 players on the field at a time – NOTE: The goal keeper must be one of those players [identified by wearing a different color vest]. The only exceptions to the minimums or maximums are during conditions of large goal differentials as described in [Game Management](#) below. If a team does not have the minimum number of players at the start of a game, the game is forfeit [in terms of the standings]. It is strongly recommended that the coaches rebalance teams at that point and play a game even though it doesn't change the forfeit outcome.

A team fielding a player who is confirmed not to be on the published roster will automatically forfeit that game.

## Player Equipment

**All leagues – players must wear soccer cleats (no metal spikes, forward studs or removable studs) and shin guards (which must be covered entirely by socks).** This is mandatory – Players will not be allowed to play without proper cleats and covered shin guards. All members of the team should be wearing the team jersey.

Players may not wear earrings, necklaces, bracelets (except for medical bracelets) or any other adornments which may cause a safety hazard. Medical bracelets that are not removed must be wrapped with tape. Players may not wear an exposed hard cast.

## Build-out Line

The Build-out line adopted by US Soccer in August 2017 will now be implemented for all U10 league games. Two lines run the width of the field, centered between the penalty area and the half-way line. Please ensure you're familiar with the rules associated with these markings (below) and educate your players accordingly. Note, the OBGC-specific implementation is slightly modified. Key points below:

- Opposing players must retreat behind the build-out line for goal kicks and whenever the goalkeeper has "control" of the ball. However, the keeper does not have to wait for the opponents to fully retreat in order to release the ball.
- Opposing players may only cross the build-out line when the keeper has released the ball AND a second player on their team has subsequently touched the ball.
- Offside is judged between the build-out line and the goal line.
- **Punting or throwing the ball by the goalkeeper (even beyond the build-out line) is still allowed. This is a variance to the US Soccer rule.**

## Game Length

U10 leagues (boys and girls) will play 4 quarters each lasting 12.5 minutes (50 total game minutes) with 3 minute breaks between quarters and a 5 minute break at half time. During playoffs only, one overtime period of 5 minutes.

U12 leagues (boys and girls) will play 2 halves each lasting 30 minutes (60 total game minutes) with a 5 minute break at half time. During the playoffs only, one overtime period of 10 minutes.

U14 leagues (boys and girls) will play 2 halves each lasting 35 minutes (70 total game minutes) with a 5 minute break at half time. During the playoffs only, one overtime period of 15 minutes.

There is NO golden goal in playoff overtime. If the tie remains a standard “shoot-out” procedure will be used.

Coaches may ask a referee for a “time check” during the game and the referee will deterministically answer how much time is remaining in the half or game (or quarter in the case of U10 games). Referees are the official time keepers.

## Rained out or Abandoned Games

In the event a game is canceled or abandoned, best efforts will be made to reschedule the game later in the season. If it is not possible to replay the game, the result will be considered a 0-0 tie if the half-time point was not reached else the result at the point the game was stopped is considered the final result.

## Delay of Game

At the discretion of the referee (and with the agreement of both coaches) a game start maybe delayed up to 10 minutes to allow a given team to assemble the minimum number of players and thus avoid a forfeit. However, the referee is entitled to reduce the game length by the duration of the delay.

## Stoppage Time

In following with Maryland recreational league conventions, there will be NO stoppage time added to games. The only exception is a time stoppage (by the referee) for a significant player injury.

## Player Safety

1. **No slide tackling** – This is not allowed in any of our age groups
2. Soccer does involve contact and players will often end up on the ground. This does not automatically mean play will be stopped. If a player injury isn't serious play will continue as long as it does not further endanger the injured player. However, if a player has a serious injury and needs immediate attention or continued play would further endanger the player, the referee will stop play. At that point the coach will come to the field and help the player. In general parents should not come on the field. Use common sense.
3. There are no headers allowed in the U10 or U12 leagues. Only U14 leagues may use headers. Note: It is only a foul if the player is intentionally trying to head the ball. If the player is struck in the head by the ball, no foul should be called. A heading infraction results in an indirect free kick.

## Playing Time for Players

1. **All players at a game MUST play at least half the game.**
2. You must play at least two goal keepers. Each goal keeper may play a maximum of one half the game.
3. Further, coaches MUST do their best to try and ensure play time for all players at a game is as close to balanced as possible. This means that NO player should be playing the entire game unless the team only has the minimum number of players (7) to play the game which would require ALL players to play the whole game. It generally isn't possible to be exactly equal for all players, but coaches should strive for this across the season.

During the playoffs, only play time rule #1 must be observed.

## Players in Age Groups

The fundamental rule is this: A player may only play in one age group/gender combination per season. Under very special circumstances, OBGC may choose to have a player move from one league to another. However, if this happens the player must move to that new league and may not play in two leagues simultaneously – even if the player legally qualifies for either league. The most common example: A player asks to play “up” in an age group above their normal level. If OBGC agrees the player can safely play at the next level up and approves the move, the player loses the ability to play at their “normal” age group level.

Under no circumstances may a player play “down” a league; i.e. play in a league for which they are too old.

## Free-kick restarts

For U10 leagues (boys and girls) only, all free kick restarts will be indirect. There will be no penalty kicks. A foul that would have resulted in a penalty kick will be moved outside the box and become an indirect free kick.

## Back Pass to the Goalkeeper

At the U12 & U14 levels regular FIFA rules apply when a team-mate intentionally kicks the ball to their goalkeeper and said keeper handles the ball; an indirect free kick on the edge of the penalty area. However, at the U10 level such an intentional pass is allowed, and play continues as normal whether the back pass is handled or not.

## Dominance Rule

If a single player scores 2 goals in a game, they must be considered as dominant. A dominant player must be placed in a defensive position and must stay on their side of the field as long as their team is winning by more than one goal. If the game is tied, the other team is winning or their team is winning by just one goal, the dominant player may play forward. After every scoring event, the role of the dominant player must be re-evaluated.

## Game Management

It is both coaches collective responsibility to make sure that games don't get completely out of hand. At large goal differentials (which begins when a team is leading by four or more goals) both coaches must actively ensure better competitive balance. This can be accomplished in many ways (taking players off, adding players, changing positions, etc.). If those techniques aren't working, the winning coach must instruct his players to stop scoring. Players who do not honor the instruction should be removed from the field to learn they must follow. The referee is empowered to instruct coaches and players of a team that is six goals ahead that scoring must cease or players will be removed if they continue scoring.

## Substitutions

**Any given substitution may only occur at the discretion of the referee.**

The coach may request a substitution when there is a stoppage of play which results in:

1. Either team's throw-in
2. Either team restarting from a goal kick, corner kick or the center circle

At all age groups, substitute players should assemble behind the sideline at the middle of the field (but still on their side) and await instruction from the referee.

A coach may substitute for a specific injured player who needs to come off the field and for a cautioned player whom the referee or coach has decided must take a break.

## Sidelines and Goal Lines

The coaches and the players are the ONLY people allowed on the players' sideline. Coaches shall keep their teams separated by the halfway line and coaches should stay on their side of the halfway line. All players should be kept at least 5 feet away from the sideline at all times to avoid game disruption and for player safety. Everyone else should be on the other sideline (called the spectator sideline). Spectators should also be at least 5 feet away from the sideline at all times. No one should be behind the goal lines (sometimes referred to as end lines).

## Managing Fouls and Carding

For the U14 leagues, the referees will manage the game using standard techniques, including using yellow and red cards. For the U10 and U12 leagues, cards will not be used.

At the discretion of the referee, a player may be sent from the field for a "cool down" break of 10mins. This can happen at all age group levels.

## Pre-game and Post-game Behavior

Before a game starts, players should be with their coach and team. Any interactions with the other team should be minimal and must be positive in nature.

After every game, the players must form a line and have a post-game hand shake. All players (unless seriously injured) must be in this line. The players must shake the hand of every player on the other team. As they go through the line, they may say "good game" or "great game" to the other players. There will be no poor sportsmanship behaviors tolerated. Poor sportsmanship behaviors include, but are not limited to, name-calling; throwing ice; slapping the opposing player's hand too hard on purpose; or pulling their hand away.

## Playoff Schedule (new as of Spring 2019)

For the larger leagues, (8 teams and above) the playoff schedule has been modified as noted in the OBGC document covering standings and playoffs. In the past this schedule has required the top seed to play the bottom seed and so on, resulting in several dispiriting games for the lower seeded teams. The revised format seeks to avoid such mismatched fixtures and to facilitate as many competitive games as possible, more in keeping with the spirit of the house soccer program. Therefore, teams below a certain seed no longer enter the playoffs but do still have games to play up to the end of the season, as the team prefers.

## Poor Sportsmanship

Abusive or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Should any person (player, coach or spectator) engage in such behavior, that person may be ejected from the field (which they must do immediately and not return).

Ejections can come from the Referee and/or an OBGC House Soccer official. Anyone ejected is subject to additional sanction – up to and including removal from the league.

## The Offside Rule

This rule is commonly misunderstood, even by experienced players and coaches. The purpose here is not for a lengthy review but to highlight the key elements of the rule.

**There is a distinction between a player being in an offside position and that player then being judged to have committed an offside offence.** Only an offence results in the referee intervening.

- A player is in an offside position if they are closer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent.
- A player may NOT be offside whilst in their own half or when receiving the ball from a throw-in, corner kick or goal kick.

- An offside offence is caused when the previously offside player is then judged to be “interfering with play or with an opponent”.
- The penalty for an offside offence is an indirect free kick at the point where the infraction occurred.

If you're really keen, the official rule is documented by the IFAB (International Football Associated Board) and can be found at [THEIFAB.COM](http://THEIFAB.COM).

### A Note on Hand Ball

Just because a ball touches the hand or arm of a player (not including the goalkeeper in the penalty area) it is not necessarily ruled to be a hand ball infraction. The **act of touching the ball must be judged to be deliberate**. In deciding intent, the referee must take into account factors such as movement of the hand toward the ball and the distance between the opponent and the ball.