



**RECREATION SOCCER  
LAWS OF THE GAME**

**2020 / 2021**

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## Contents

Law 1 – The Field of Play.....	3
Law 2 – The Ball.....	3
Law 3 – The Players.....	3
Law 4 – The Player’s Equipment.....	4
Law 5 – The Referee.....	5
Law 6 – The Other Match Officials.....	5
Law 7 – The Duration of the Match.....	6
Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play.....	6
Law 9 – Ball in and Out of Play.....	7
Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match.....	7
Law 11 – Offside.....	7
Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct.....	7
Law 13 – Free Kicks.....	8
Law 14 – The Penalty Kick.....	9
Law 15 – The Throw-in.....	9
Law 16 – The Goal Kick.....	9
Law 17 – The Corner Kick.....	10
Miscellaneous.....	10
COVID-19 and Communicable Diseases.....	10
Build Out Line.....	10
References and Useful Links.....	11
Revision History.....	12
Notes.....	12

The current IFAB "Laws of the Game" (<http://www.theifab.com/laws>) will be applied for Fredericksburg Recreation Soccer, with modifications and definitions as identified in this document.

### Law 1 – The Field of Play

Field of Play will be at FFC's discretion, but will be approximately as follows:

- **U6 - U8:** Small field (15-25x25-35 yds), Goals: 4' x 6'
- **U9 - U10:** Quarter field (35-45x55-65 yds), Goals: 6'x12'
- **U11 - U12:** Half field (~80x55 yds), Goals: 7'x21'
- **U13 - HS:**
  - Full Field (~105x70 yds), Goals: 8'x24' – used for 11v11
  - Half Field (~80x55 yds), Goals: 7'x21' – used for 8v8

### Law 2 – The Ball

Ball sizes will be as follows:

- **U6 - U8:** Size 3
- **U9 - U12:** Size 4
- **U13 - HS:** Size 5

### Law 3 – The Players

The number of players per team, for both roster and games will be as follows, but may be adjusted as needed at FFC's discretion:

- **U6 - U8:** Games: 5v5; Minimum players: 3; goalkeepers; Recommended Roster size: 4-7
- **U9 - U10:** Games: 7v7; Minimum players: 5; goalkeepers; Recommended roster size: 7-12; optional to play up to 9v9 at FFC's discretion.
- **U11 - U12:** Games: 9v9; Minimum players: 6; goalkeepers; Recommended roster size: 9-14; optional to play down to 7v7 at FFC's discretion.
- **U13 - HS:**
  - Games: 11v11; Minimum players: 7; goalkeepers; Recommended roster size: 11-16
  - Games: 8v8; Minimum players: 6; goalkeepers; Recommended roster size: 9-14

#### *Additional player rules*

- A. No roster check is required.
- B. When teams are short of players, coaches will work with one another and share players to promote even play/player number requirements.
- C. Coaches should strive to provide all players present for a game with close-to-equal playing time.

- D. Substitutions will be unlimited from either team and may be made before goal kicks, throw-ins, and prior to any kick-off. Substitutions may also be made at other stoppages of play (e.g. injuries or cautions). Coaches should display sportsmanship with respect to substitution times and refrain from excessive substituting. Substitutions will be made from the center line on the coaches side of the field.

#### Law 4 – The Player’s Equipment

Players should wear FFC uniforms as defined for the FFC Recreation Program. The following items are required:

- FFC Soccer Jersey (or goalkeeper jersey).
- Black Shorts
- Black Socks
- Shin Guards. Shin guards **must be worn** and be of suitable size for the player. They must be worn inside socks which must cover the entire shin guard.
- Soccer cleats or suitable sports shoes. Metal cleats are not permitted. Football cleats or any other type of cleat that has a central front stud **MUST NOT** be worn without exception.

#### *Additional equipment rules*

- A. FFC Home teams (displayed first on schedules) will wear **RED** jerseys. FFC Away teams will wear **BLACK** jerseys.  
All teams are requested to bring BOTH jerseys to all games.
- B. Should games be played against other clubs, the home team is typically expected to change jerseys should there be a conflict.
- C. Goalkeepers can wear any jersey color (or pinny) that does not conflict with field players from either team.
- D. For inclement/cold weather:
  - a. Undershirts with long sleeves are permitted, preferably to match the jersey color, but this is not mandatory.
  - b. Long pants are permitted, preferably black.
  - c. Gloves or soft caps are permitted.
  - d. Hoodies are **not permitted** due to safety
  - e. Hard-brimmed hats or headwear is **not permitted**
- E. No jewelry, wrist bands, bracelets, watches or exercise monitors are permitted. Earrings and other piercing jewelry **MUST be removed without exception** – even if recently pierced; they cannot be covered with tape. Note that medical wrist bands are permitted.
- F. Hair bands must be soft. Plastic beads or plastic head bands are **not permitted**.

## Law 5 – The Referee

Referees will be assigned by FFC based upon age group:

- **U8:** Center referee only (or coaches will officiate the game play).
- **U9 - U10:** Center referee only.  
Parent ‘club linesmen’ can be used at the discretion of the center referee.
- **U11 - U12:** Center referee with 2 assistant Referees will be utilized.
- **U13 - HS:** Center referee with 2 Assistant Referees will be utilized.

If no assistant referees provided, parent ‘club linesmen’ can be used at the discretion of the center referee.

*Additional referee rules:*

- A. Should a referee not be available, team coaches must designate a substitute referee, who will be deemed the official referee for the match.
- B. Coaches, players and spectators **are expected to accept all referee decisions and exhibit respect and good sportsmanship at all times.**
- C. FFC may permit referees to be provided to support local referee training classes.

## Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

Assistant Referees may be assigned based upon age group.

All items identified under **Law 5 – The Referee** will also apply to this section.

*Additional rules for other match officials:*

- A. Should an assistant referee not be available, team coaches must designate a substitute assistant referee, who will be deemed an official referee for the match. Substitute assistant referees must not coach either team during the match.
- B. For age groups where a substitute assistant referee or ‘club linesman’ is used, the substitute assistant referee will identify ball in/out of play only. Any other duties will be as assigned by the center referee for that game.
- C. Coaches, players and spectators **are expected to accept all assistant referee decisions and exhibit respect and good sportsmanship at all times.**

## Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

Game lengths will be as follows for regular season play, utilizing a running clock:

- **U6 - U9:** 4 x 10-minute quarters; 5-minute quarter breaks.
- **U9 - U10:** 2 x 25-minute halves; 5-minute half time.
  - *Alternative: 4 x 10-minute quarters with 2-5-minute quarter breaks.*
- **U11 - U12:** 2 x 30-minute halves; 5-minute half time.
- **U13 - U14: 11v11:** 2 x 35-minute halves; 5-minute half time.
  - *Alternative: 8v8: 2 x 30-minute halves; 5-minute half time.*
- **U15 - HS: 11v11:** 2 x 40-minute halves; 5-minute half time.
  - *Alternative: 8v8: 2 x 35-minute halves; 5-minute half time.*

Note: Tournaments or Scrimmagefests or other special events or games may specify other game durations at the discretion of FFC or the sponsoring club.

*Additional match rules:*

- A. **Timekeeping.**
  - a. No additional time will be added for regular season play.
  - b. Game duration/timekeeping for post-season games/scrimmages will be based upon rules defined for such events.
- B. **Heat:** In the event of extreme heat/weather conditions, a short water break may be administered by the referee approximately mid-way through each half of the game based upon a natural stoppage in play. The clock will continue to run during such water breaks.
- C. **Inclement Weather.** Should there be thunder or lightning, games will be suspended as follows:
  - a. **ALL players should leave the field immediately and return to the safety of vehicles.**
  - b. From the last instance of lightning/thunder, a 30-minute timer will be started. Once 30 minutes have passed with no lightning/thunder activity, the game may resume.
  - c. FFC field staff will determine whether games will be abandoned due to inclement weather. Any abandoned games may be rescheduled at the discretion of FFC.

## Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

IFAB laws will be followed with the following modifications:

- A. Goal Kicks.
  - **U6 – U9:** Punting/long kicks are not permitted for goal kicks.
  - **U10 - U12:** Punting/long kicks should be discouraged.
  - **U13-HS:** for **8v8** play, ball must land in defensive half.  
*See Law 16 – The Goal Kick for more details.*
- B. Games will start as scheduled. However, due to inclement weather or other conditions beyond our control, games may be delayed.

## Law 9 – Ball in and Out of Play

IFAB laws will be followed.

For substitution laws, see *Law 3 – The Players*.

## Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

- Scores will not be recorded in regular season play for FFC Recreation Soccer.
- **Scores will not be run up.** In the essence of good sportsmanship, coaches will work with one another to ensure that the educational environment for FFC Recreation Soccer is maintained in all games. Thus, if a game has a goal differential of 5 or more goals, coaches should consider making adjustments:

- **U6 - U8:** Coaches should avoid where possible lop-sided games.
- **U9 - U12:** Consider adding/removing/trading players.
- **U13 - HS:** Consider reducing number of players on one team.

When adding/removing players, min/max no. of players must be adhered to – see *Law 3 – The Players*.

- There will be no periods of extra time or kicks from the mark during regular season play.
- Use of extra time or kicks from the mark for tournaments/scrimmage play will be based upon rules defined for such events.

## Law 11 – Offside

Laws for offside will vary based upon age group as follows;

- **U6 - U8:** No Offside.
- **U9 - U10:** Offside may only be called should the offence occur beyond the build out line. See additional rules below.
- **U11 - HS:** Use IFAB laws. This includes all formats of play for U14 and HS.

## Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Laws for fouls and misconduct for players will be per IFAB laws, with the following modifications:

- **ALL AGE GROUPS:** Slide tackling is NOT permitted. The goalkeeper is permitted to slide within the penalty area, but safety of all players should be the priority. The Referee will determine if play by the goalkeeper is deemed safe.

*Additional rules for fouls and misconduct:*

### A. **Goalkeeper punting/drop-kicks.**

*Punting: when the goalkeeper has the ball in hand, releases it, and kicks the ball before it hits the ground.*

*Drop-kick: when the goalkeeper has the ball in hand, releases it, the ball bounces once (even if briefly) and kicks the ball before the ball hits the ground a second time*

*Note: a 'placed' goal kick is not classified as a punt or a drop-kick.*

**U9 - U12:** To encourage team play, punting or drop-kicks are not permitted.

- Should the ball be punted or drop-kicked, the referee will award an indirect free kick, using IFAB Indirect Free Kick laws at the point of the offense. The referee may use discretion for the first offence and allow the play to be retaken.

**U13-HS:** When playing 8v8, punting or drop-kicks are not permitted. When playing 11v11 (full field), punting and drop-kicks are permitted.

- B. Abusive behavior.** Abusive behavior from or between **any** participants, including referees, coaches, players or spectators **will not be tolerated**. Such behavior may result in the offender being asked to leave the field. Refer to **FFC's Policy & Procedures Handbook** at [www.fredericksburgfc.org](http://www.fredericksburgfc.org) for further information.

## Law 13 – Free Kicks

Laws for free kicks will be per IFAB laws with the following modifications:

### A. Free Kicks.

- **U6 - U8:** All free kicks will be indirect. Opponents should be at least TEN FEET away from the ball on all restarts.
- **U9 - U10:** Opponents should be at least EIGHT YARDS from the ball on all restarts.

### B. Heading.

- **U8 - U12:** Heading is **not permitted** per US Soccer guidelines. If the ball hits the head (i.e. anything above the shoulders) of a player, the game is stopped and will be restarted as follows:
  - i. **Deliberate heading of ball.** Indirect Free Kick to the other team at the point of infraction, per IFAB Indirect Free Kick laws.
  - ii. **Accidental heading of the ball.** Drop ball at the point of infraction, per IFAB drop ball laws.

### C. Punting/Drop-kicks.

*Punting: when the goalkeeper has the ball in hand and drop-kicks the ball.*

- a. **U8 - U12:** Punting is not permitted per US Soccer guidelines regarding heading of the ball at this age. If the ball is punted or drop-kicked, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the other team at the point of infraction, per IFAB Indirect Free Kick laws.

*For younger age groups, please consider the spirit of the game and use appropriate discretion.*

- b. *U13-HS. When playing 8v8, Punting/Drop-kicks are not permitted. If the ball is punted or drop-kicked, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the other team at the point of infraction, per IFAB Indirect Free Kick laws.*

### Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

Laws for penalty kicks will be per IFAB laws with the following modifications:

- **U6 - U8:** No penalty kicks.

### Law 15 – The Throw-in

Laws for throw-ins will be per IFAB laws.

### Law 16 – The Goal Kick

Laws for goal kicks will be per IFAB laws with the following modifications:

- **U8 - U9:** Goal kicks can be taken anywhere near the vicinity of the goal.
- **U10 - U12:** Due to ***build out line*** implementation, the expectation is for the goal kick taker (typically the goalkeeper) to play out/pass out from the back, rather than long-kick the ball into play.

- Players from other team should retreat behind the buildout line for the goal kick and only approach once the ball is in play (i.e. the ball has been clearly kicked and moved. Note that the ball no longer has to leave the penalty area to be in play.)

*Note: No infringement will be called if a goalkeeper chooses to play the ball early.*

- The expectation is that the ball will be played and received inside of the build-out line, promoting playing out from the back.
- High/long kicks should be discouraged, due to the no-heading rule at this age level.
- *Note: a ‘placed’ goal kick is not classified as a punt or a drop-kick:  
Punting: when the goalkeeper has the ball in hand, releases it, and kicks the ball before it hits the ground.  
Drop-kick: when the goalkeeper has the ball in hand, releases it, the ball bounces once (even if briefly) and kicks the ball before the ball hits the ground a second time*

Referees should use discretion with goal kicks at this age: Consider a warning/retake the first time. Should the referee deem it necessary, persistent infringement of this guidance can be accommodated with an indirect free kick, using IFAB Indirect Free Kick laws from the point of the goal kick.

- **U13 - HS:** Per IFAB.

## Law 17 – The Corner Kick

Laws for corner kicks will be per IFAB laws, with the following modifications:

- **U8:** Corner kicks can be taken anywhere near the vicinity of the corner.

## Miscellaneous

- Alcohol or tobacco use is prohibited at **Fredericksburg FC** activities.
- No pets are permitted at **FFC Park**, except for service animals.
- Loud noise makers (such as megaphones) are prohibited.
- Drones are prohibited at **FFC Park**, unless prior consent has been granted.
- Coaching during game should be conducted by team coaches only.  
Parents are not permitted to coach from the side lines and instead should consider encouraging remarks to ALL players, irrespective of which team they play for.
- Team benches will both be on the same side of the field.  
For side-by-side fields, team benches will be between fields, unless directed otherwise by **FFC**.
- Spectators will take the other side of the field between the 18 yard lines/Penalty box areas, unless directed otherwise by **FFC**.  
No spectators permitted by corner flags or behind the goal/end lines.  
For side-by-side fields, spectators will be located at the outside perimeter.
- Players are **NOT PERMITTED to practice or warm up in the penalty areas** of any marked field at FFC Park. Coaches should always consider conducting pre-game warm up activities in off-field locations.  
Limited goalkeeper warm up prior to the start of a game is acceptable.

## COVID-19 and Communicable Diseases

FFC recommends that all visitors and participants attending events at FFC Park follow the latest published CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 and communicable diseases. Specific competitions may have additional guidelines that should be followed accordingly. All FFC Park patrons are expected to respect the decisions and safety of others with respect to this area of concern.

## Build Out Line

Per **US Soccer Player Development Initiatives**, U10 and U12 games will utilize a **build out line** that is halfway between the half-way line and the penalty area.

- If **build out lines** are not marked, coaches should place cones/pinnies on either touch line to identify the location of the build out lines in each half of the field. Ensure that such items are at least one yard from the field of play.
- The **build out line** will be used as a **retreat line** for the opposing team during goal kicks and free kicks taken from within the penalty area.
- If the kicking team chooses to take the goal kick or free kick early, this is at their discretion and no infringement will be called on the opposing team.

- Once the ball is in play (i.e. the ball has been clearly kicked and moved. Note that the ball no longer has to leave the penalty area to be in play.), the opposing team may challenge the ball.  
*NOTE: With FFC Recreation Soccer's emphasis on education and playing out from the back, teams should refrain from coaching their offence to rush to the ball immediately as it re-enters play, giving the opponent the ability to receive the ball first.*
- For **U9** and **U10** (7v7), offside calls will only be made between the **build out line** and the **end line**.

## References and Useful Links

### Fredericksburg FC

PO Box 3895

Fredericksburg, Virginia 22402.

Phone: 540-760-6409

[www.fredericksburgfc.org](http://www.fredericksburgfc.org)

### FFC Park

[1898 Mills Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22408](https://www.google.com/maps/place/1898+Mills+Drive,+Fredericksburg,+VA+22408)

### FFC Documents

[FFC Policy and Procedures Handbook](#)

*FFC Website > Our Club > Club Policies and Documents > Policies and Procedures*

### IFAB Laws of the Game

<http://www.theifab.com/laws>

### US Soccer

<https://www.ussoccer.com>

### US Soccer Player Development Initiatives

<https://www.ussoccer.com/coaching-education/resources/us-soccer-player-development-initiatives>

### US Soccer Coaching Education

<https://www.ussoccer.com/coaching-education>

### United Soccer Coaches (formerly NSCAA)

<https://unitedsoccercoaches.org>

