



Jefferson City Area YMCA  
Spring 2026 Outdoor Soccer Rules



The Jefferson City YMCA youth soccer program offers youth a chance to play regardless of race, gender, religious affiliation, financial resources or athletic talent. The program seeks to offer each player an appropriate level of competition so that physical, social and spiritual skills may be developed to their utmost. Player assignment is by school and grade level, but the YMCA may make exceptions.

If a situation is not covered by these abbreviated rules, USSF rules should apply.

1. **Officials:** A standard 3 person officiating crew may be made available for all 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade level games (Referee and 2 Assistant Referees “AR”). A 2 person officiating crew should be used when personnel are not available. A single referee or a 2 person officiating crew will be used for 1<sup>st</sup> grade level games. Officials may provide technical assistance to players on the field, but will not override a coach’s instructions. Referee abuse is not tolerated.
2. **Substitutions:** Substitutions shall be made with the approval of the Referee. Either team may substitute between periods, on a Goal Kick, Corner Kick, Goal, injured player, or to caution or disqualify a player. A substitution is initiated when the team possessing the ball is at the Half Line waiting to be called in. Ejected players may be replaced and may not play in their team’s next game. A player on the field may change places with the goalkeeper whenever there is a stoppage; the referee must be notified when the goalkeeper is changed, players who have left the game may re-enter as subs. A player with blood on the uniform shall exit the game and may not enter until the blood is removed (athletic or duct tape may be used to temporarily cover the blood with referee approval).
3. **Equipment:** All players must wear shin guards; dangerous clothing or equipment may not be worn: jewelry and hoodies (unless hood is tucked), including hard casts or hard splints (unless approved by the Y). Religious or medical jewelry may be taped inside the uniforms. The goalkeeper’s jersey should contrast with those of both teams. Soccer cleats are encouraged (no metal).
4. **Coin Toss:** Away team will call the toss. The winner of the toss will decide ball possession or direction.
5. **Kick Offs:** Kicks from the center mark may travel any direction. The striker may be in the attacking half to begin.
6. **Scoring:** Referees will signal when goals are scored, but they will not be tallied. A winner will not be determined. A goal can be scored from any kick on the field, if allowed by the restart (Direct or Indirect).
7. **Game Clock:** Time will not be stopped. Games should start and end on time, unless approval is given due to player injuries. Games will end at the conclusion of the allotted time. The horn will sound for dangerous weather; all will vacate the fields and go to their vehicles until the weather clears or games are cancelled. Half played games are complete.
8. **Offside:** Pre-K through 1<sup>st</sup> grade will not have offside violations called. All other games the Referee and/or AR’s will signal when an offside violation is determined. A player in an offside position receiving the ball from an opponent’s deliberate play is not a violation. Deflections would be a violation. There is no Offside for Goal Kicks, Throw-Ins, Corner Kicks, or intentional play from the defender.
9. **Free Kicks:** All free kicks will be Indirect except for 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade games where Direct Kicks are allowed based on the offense, this would also include Corner Kick’s. There will be no Penalty Kicks. On an Indirect Kick the ball must be kicked and clearly moved with a second touch by any other player before a goal can be counted. A touch and ball movement are all that is needed. If requested, 8yds will be given and then a ceremonial restart provided; space should be given for a quick restart. Goal kicks and other restarts inside the penalty area do not need to leave the penalty area to be a live ball. A Goal Kick will be played from the 6yd line of the Goal Area.

10. **Drop Ball:** If play is stopped while the ball is in play due to an injury, hits a foreign object or referee and goes out of bounds or changes team possession then a drop ball restart is given to one player of the team who has or would have had possession or to the team who last touched the ball and the ball is dropped at its position when play was stopped. The ball is in play when it touches the ground and all other players are 5 yds from the ball. If the ball was in the penalty area when play was stopped then the ball is dropped to the goalkeeper within the penalty area.
11. **Fouls:** There will be no slides by a field player at any age level which includes attempt to apply a tackle or shot on goal when near an opposing player. More severe fouls will be dealt with by showing a yellow/red cards and/or time outs or ejections. A yellow card will require a 2 minute rest on the bench. A slide to keep the ball in play may be allowed as long as there is no danger to the player or to any other player. Slides by the Goal Keeper are allowed as long as there is not a danger to themselves or other players.
12. **Headers:** Players from 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are not allowed to intentionally head the ball. Intentional head contact with the ball will be a violation with the opposite team receiving an Indirect Kick. This is to reduce possible concussions. Play should be stopped if appropriate when the ball strikes a player's head.
13. **Handball:** A touch of the had/arm to the ball is not always an offense. Protecting the head, chest or groin is allowed as long as the hands do not play the ball. If the arm is used to make the body bigger, this would not be regarded as an offense. If the arm is down play should continue. If the arm is supporting the body on the ground play should continue. If the ball touches the foot and then the arm play should continue unless there is a shot on goal.
14. **Throw-Ins:** Throw-ins will follow the process as listed in the laws of the game. Two hands on the ball with a complete follow-through of the hands starting behind the ears. The feet must remain in contact with the ground during the throw and behind or in contact with the Touch Line. A re-throw may be appropriate by age level with the referee's discretion.
15. **Goal Keeper:** Intentional pass back from a teammate to the keeper should result in an indirect kick. If the keeper possesses the ball for more than 8 seconds will result in a corner kick for the opposing team.
16. **Spectators:** Fans and families are encouraged to observe social distancing and may sit anywhere around the pitch, but should not distract players especially when taking a throw-in, corner kick or the goal keeper. Fans and families are discouraged from sitting on the team bench or within the team technical area.
17. **Coaches:** The team coach and assistant coaches should remain near their own team's technical area to provide strategic instruction to the players on the field. This helps to alleviate confusion from where instructions are coming from. Coaches should not be in the opposing team's technical area.
18. **Sportsmanship:** Use of profanity/vulgar language and other unsporting conduct shall not be tolerated by player, coach or fan. Appropriate response: Discretionary by the referee as to a warning to player and coach, card for a player or coach, request to cease for fan and incident report to the YMCA. Continued unsporting conduct by the coaches and spectators shall be reported immediately to the YMCA supervisor and may be requested to be dismissed by the referee or YMCA staff. Congratulations of play to players, coaches and teams are encouraged after each match.
19. **NEW:** Referees for 1<sup>st</sup> grade matches will be assigned as new/young officials learning to work games. They are learning the laws and procedures to ensure fair play just as players are learning.

#### Summary of Playing Conditions

Grade	# of Players	GK	Game Length	Ball Size	Headers	Keeper Punts	Offside
Pre-K	5 vs 5	No	6 – 6 min quarters	3	No	No	No
K	5 vs 5	No	6 – 6 min quarters	3	No	No	No
1	6v6 or 7v7	Yes	4 – 12 min quarters	4	No	No	No
2-3	7 vs 7	Yes	4 – 12 min quarters	4	No	No	Yes
4-5	9 vs 9	Yes	4 – 12 min quarters	4	No	Yes	Yes
6-8	9 vs 9	Yes	4 – 12 min quarters	5	Yes	Yes	Yes