



PARKS & RECREATION

Youth Soccer Rules 2025-2026

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General League Information

Division Overview:

Division	Ball Size	Players on Field	Goalie	Free Kick	Scoring	Off sides
U6	3	4v4	No	Indirect	None	No
U8	3	6v6	No	Indirect	Yes	No
U10	4	7v7	Yes	Direct	Yes	Yes
U12	4	9v9	Yes	Direct	Yes	Yes
U15	5	11v11	Yes	Direct	Yes	Yes

**League administration has the right to change the chart above as it sees necessary

**In the event of a referee shortage, coaches/parents may be expected to act as officials

Uniforms/Equipment:

- A. Jersey numbers are required.
- B. No jewelry- including piercings may be worn
- C. Cleats- Rubber ONLY. No metal cleats allowed
- D. Shin Guards- REQUIRED to participate.

Weather:

- A. In the event of unfavorable weather/field conditions that lead to game cancellation/delay, Lufkin Parks and Recreation will notify their head coaches, who are then responsible for notifying their parents. Coaches will be notified via email and a Facebook post will be made on the Lufkin Parks and Recreation page by 7:00 am on Game Day.
- B. If weather conditions become unfavorable during a game:
 - a. Site Supervisor will make decision to delay/cancel games
 - b. If site supervisor is not present, the referee has immediate discretion as to delay the game, and then will contact the site supervisor
 - c. A game must reach halftime in order to be considered complete. If a game does not reach halftime before it is cancelled, it will be rescheduled.

Game Clock:

- A. All games are limited by time. All games will be timed, by the referee, according to the age specific game time.

Mercy Rule:

If a team has a lead of 10 goals beyond the first half, the game will be stopped and declared as final.

Forfeits:

A. The team forfeiting their game will receive a 3-0 loss. The loss will be reflected in the standings.

Minimum Playing Time:

- A. Teams must abide by the following minimum playing time rules:
- a. Each player is required to play 50% of each game.
 - b. In the case of an injury to a player who is playing their required half a medical substitution will be allowed.

Sportsmanship:

- A. Coaches will be responsible for the conduct of their players, parents and themselves. Poor sportsmanship or disrespect toward any referee, opposing player or coach will not be tolerated. Coaches, parents and players are to speak to all players in a positive and supportive manner. Violations will result in the referee ejecting the coach, parent, or player from the field. League administrators will investigate all ejections and act accordingly.

Player Discipline:

- A. Player receiving YELLOW card must be subbed out (yellow card is issued to penalize the player)
- B. Any player or coach that receives a RED card must leave the team area; management may request that the coach or player leave the premise. Players will be banned for the rest of the game and day. Coaches may be subject to a 1 game suspension.

Player Substitution:

Players may be substituted during the game:

- A. At a thrown in, by team in possession
- B. At a goal-kick
- C. After a goal is scored
- D. At an injury

Slide Tackling:

- A. Slide tackling is strictly prohibited and will not be allowed under any circumstances.

Heading:

- A. Heading the ball is prohibited in U6, U8, and U10. If a player heads the ball, the referee shall award an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the spot of the infraction. Heading is allowed in U12 and U15.

Tie-Breakers:

- A. Applicable only for U8, U10, U12, and U15
- B. Tie-breakers will only occur in playoff games. Playoff games can NOT end in a tie. If a game is tied after regulation, we will go to a 5-person shootout:

- i. A coin toss will determine who goes first
- ii. Teams will alternate penalty kicks (5 players for each team)
- iii. U8 will not have goalies and will take penalty kicks from the midfield line.
- iv. U10, U12, and U15 the goalie is participating. New goalie is allowed to enter after end of regulation and before shootout.
- v. If score is still tied after five shooters per team, then move to 1 vs 1 shooters until there is a winner

**The contents of this Rule/Bylaw packet are intended to be guidelines for the operation of the Lufkin Parks & Recreation Youth Soccer. League officials reserve the right to make adjustments to this document and other league rules and procedures as they see necessary in order to provide the best recreational soccer opportunity for all of those involved. **

Coaches, Parents, & Players

Coaches:

- A. Coaches are only allowed on the field during play in U6. Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during play in U8, U10, U12, or U15 unless assisting an injured player
- B. Coaches are responsible for the actions and behaviors of themselves, their teams' parents, and their teams' players.
- C. Coaches are expected to display good sportsmanship. Failure to do so can lead to an ejection from the premises and a meeting with league officials

Parents/Spectators:

- A. Parents/spectators are NOT allowed on the field of play at any time
- B. Parents/spectators are to remain on the designated sideline OPPOSITE of the team sideline. Parents/spectators are NOT allowed on the team sideline OR in the areas behind the goals.
- C. Parents are expected to display good sportsmanship. Failure to do so can lead to an ejection from the premises and a meeting with league officials.

Players:

- A. Players are expected to display good sportsmanship towards opponents and coaches.

League Administrators:

- A. Lufkin Parks & Recreation staff, have the final say in disputes that may arise during, before, or after games

U6 Division Game Play

U6 Division General Rules:

- A. Field Size: 65ft. X 55ft.
- B. Ball Size: Size 3 Soccer Ball
- C. Number of Players on the Field: Game shall be played 4 vs. 4
- D. Goalie: There are NO goalies in U6
- E. Scoring: There is NO score kept in U6
- F. Off-sides: There are no off-sides in U6
- G. Game Length: Four 8 minute quarters

Referees:

- A. The referee/coaches can stop the game for infringement of the rules and can suspend or terminate the game whenever the referee deems such stoppage necessary, for example, severe weather, interference by spectators and/or coaches.

Coaches:

- A. One coach per team is allowed on the field in the U6 division

Kick-Off:

- A. Kick off will be decided at the beginning of the game by a coin toss with the team winning the toss choosing side of the field. The team losing the coin toss will kick off. Teams will switch for the second half. Opponents must be at least 10 (ten) feet from the ball.

Free Kicks (Indirect):

- A. Kick-off, goal kicks and fouls are indirect kicks (i.e. a goal cannot be scored by kicking the ball directly into the goal: the ball must first be touched by another player). Defending players must be at least 12 (twelve) feet / 4 (four) yards away from the ball at the time of the free kick.

Fouls and Misconduct:

- A. A player who commits any of the following offenses shall be penalized by the award of an indirect free kick to the opponents:
 - i. Trips an opponent
 - ii. Charges opponent in violent or dangerous manner
 - iii. Holds an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
 - iv. Handles the ball, "handball"; a "handball" shall not be called when the player is attempting to protect themselves from being struck by the ball. The referee has full discretion.

- B. A player shall be ejected from the game/field if:
 - i. In the opinion of referee/coach, the player is guilty of fighting or uses foul, abusive, or improper language

Ball Out of Play:

- A. The ball is out of bounds when the whole ball passes over the whole sideline or goal line

No Goalies:

- A. Players are only allowed to stand inside the goal box if they are directly playing the ball. Players may play defensive positions, but must move up the field with the play. All children should be involved in the action.

U8 Division Game Play

U8 Division General Rules:

- A. Field Size: 35yds X 25yds.
- B. Ball Size: Size 3 Soccer Ball
- C. Number of Players on the Field: Game shall be played 6 vs. 6
- D. Scoring: Score is not kept in U8
- E. Off-sides: There are no off-sides in U8
- F. Game Length: Four 10 minute quarters

Referees:

- A. There will be 1 referee, assigned by the league, for U8 games. Coaches will act as “officials” during the game if there is a shortage in referees. Those coaches will be notified before the start of the game.
- B. The referee/coaches can stop the game for infringement of the rules and can suspend or terminate the game whenever the referee deems such stoppage necessary, for example, severe weather, or interference by spectators and/or coaches.

Coaches:

- A. Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during play unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

Kick-Off:

- A. Kick-off will be decided at the beginning of the game by a coin toss with the team winning the toss choosing side of the field. The team losing the coin toss will kick off. Teams will switch for the second half. Opponents must be at least 10 (ten) feet from the ball.

Free Kicks: Indirect

Fouls and Misconduct:

- A. A player who commits any of the following offenses shall be penalized by the award of an indirect free kick to the opponents:
 - i. Kick or attempts to kick an opponent
 - ii. Trips an opponent
 - iii. Charges opponent in violent or dangerous manner
 - iv. Holds an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
 - v. Pushes an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
 - vi. Handles the ball, “handball”; a “handball” shall not be called when the player is attempting to protect themselves from being struck by the ball. The referee has full discretion.

- B. A player shall be ejected from the game/field if:
 - i. In the opinion of referee/coach, the player is guilty of fighting or uses foul, abusive, or improper language

Ball Out of Play:

- A. The ball is out of bounds when the whole ball passes over the whole sideline or goal line
The ball will be put back in play by the opposing team as follows:
 - i. Played over the sideline: a throw-in is taken at the point the whole ball crossed the line.
 - ii. Played over the goal line by the defending team: A corner kick is taken by the attacking team from the corner arc on the side of the field where the ball crossed the goal line.
 - iii. Played over the goal line by the attacking team: A goal kick is taken by the defending team from anywhere in the goal area.
 - iv. Each half is started with a kick-off. Second and fourth quarters are restarted where play in the previous quarter ended with a stoppage of play

Goalies/Keepers:

- A. There are no goalies in U8. Sweepers are allowed.

Sweepers - The sweeper is the last defensive player before the goal. The sweeper does not typically mark an opponent, but rather will “sweep” back and forth in front of the goal to get rid of any shots or passes in front of the net.

The Sweeper cannot stand in the goal box or use their hands but they must move forward with the play of the game at least to mid field.

Fouls - All fouls shall be penalized with indirect kicks

Restarts - Kick offs, free kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are used

to start or restart play.

If there is an infraction of the FIFA throw-in rules, the player throwing the ball in shall receive one additional throw-in after a

correcting instruction from referee. If the player violates the rule on his/her second attempt then the opposing team shall be awarded a throw-in.

U10 Division Game Play

U10 Division General Rules:

- A. Field Size: 60 yd. X 40 yd.
- B. Ball Size: Size 4 Soccer Ball; Provided by the HOME team
- C. Number of Players on the Field: Game shall be played 7 vs. 7
- D. Scoring: Score is kept in U10
- E. Off-sides: There are off-sides in U10
- F. Game Length: 20 minute halves

Referees:

- A. There will be 2 referees, assigned by the league, for U10 games.
- B. The referees can stop the game for infringement of the rules and can suspend or terminate the game whenever the referee deems such stoppage necessary, for example, severe weather, or interference by spectators and/or coaches.

Coaches:

- A. Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

Kick-Off:

- A. Kick off will be decided at the beginning of the game by a coin toss with the team winning the toss choosing side of the field. The team losing the coin toss will kick off. Teams will switch for the second half.

Penalty Kicks:

- A. The penalty kick spot for U10 is 10 ½ yards from the goal line.

Fouls and Misconduct:

- A. A player who commits any of the following offenses shall be penalized by the award of a direct free kick to the opponents:
 - i. Kick or attempts to kick an opponent
 - ii. Trips an opponent
 - iii. Charges opponent in violent or dangerous manner
 - iv. Holds an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
 - v. Pushes an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
- B. A player shall be ejected from the game/field if:
 - i. In the opinion of referee, the player is guilty of fighting or uses foul, abusive, or improper language

Ball Out of Play:

- A. The ball is out of bounds when the whole ball passes over the whole sideline or goal line

Goalies/Keepers:

- A. Keepers may punt the ball. Once a keeper has possession of the ball all opposing players must vacate the goalie box area and may not challenge the keeper until he/she crosses the goalie box line.
- B. Goalkeeper will wear colors that distinguish him/her from other players

U12 Division Game Play

U12 Division General Rules:

- A. Field Size: 50 yd. X 80 yd.
- B. Ball Size: Size 4 Soccer Ball; Provided by the HOME team
- C. Number of Players on the Field: Game shall be played 9 vs. 9
- D. Scoring: Score is kept in U12
- E. Off-sides: There are off-sides in U12
- F. Game Length: 25 minute halves

Referees:

- A. There will be 2 referees, assigned by the league, for U12 games.
- B. The referees can stop the game for infringement of the rules and can suspend or terminate the game whenever the referee deems such stoppage necessary, for example, severe weather, interference by spectators and/or coaches.

Coaches:

- A. Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

Kick-Off:

- A. Kick off will be decided at the beginning of the game by a coin toss with the team winning the toss choosing side of the field. The team losing the coin toss will kick off. Teams will switch for the second half.

Penalty Kicks:

- A. The penalty kick spot for U12 is 12 yards from the goal line.

Fouls and Misconduct:

- A. A player who commits any of the following offenses shall be penalized by the award of a direct free kick to the opponents:
 - i. Kick or attempts to kick an opponent
 - ii. Trips an opponent
 - iii. Charges opponent in violent or dangerous manner
 - iv. Holds an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
 - v. Pushes an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
- B. A player shall be ejected from the game/field if:
 - i. In the opinion of referee, the player is guilty of fighting or uses foul, abusive, or improper language

Ball Out of Play:

- A. The ball is out of bounds when the whole ball passes over the whole sideline or goal line

Goalies/Keepers:

- A. Keepers may punt the ball. Once a Keeper has possession of the ball all opposing players must vacate the goalie box area and may not challenge the Keeper until he/she crosses the goalie box line.
- B. Goalkeeper will wear colors that distinguish him/her from other players

U15 Division Game Play

U15 Division General Rules:

- A. Field Size: 100 yd. X 65 yd.
- B. Ball Size: Size 5 Soccer Ball; Provided by the HOME team
- C. Number of Players on the Field: Game shall be played 11 vs. 11
- D. Scoring: Score is kept in U15
- E. Off-sides: There are off-sides in U15
- F. Game Length: 30 Minute Halves

Referees:

- A. There will be 2 referees, assigned by the league, for U15 games.
- B. The referees can stop the game for infringement of the rules and can suspend or terminate the game whenever the referee deems such stoppage necessary, for example, severe weather, interference by spectators and/or coaches.

Coaches:

- A. Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

Kick-Off:

- A. Kick off will be decided at the beginning of the game by a coin toss with the team winning the toss choosing side of the field. The team losing the coin toss will kick off. Teams will switch for the second half.

Penalty Kicks:

- A. The penalty kick spot for U15 is 12 yards from the goal line.

Fouls and Misconduct:

- A. A player who commits any of the following offenses shall be penalized by the award of a direct free kick to the opponents:
 - i. Kick or attempts to kick an opponent
 - ii. Trips an opponent
 - iii. Charges opponent in violent or dangerous manner
 - iv. Holds an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
 - v. Pushes an opponent with the hand or any part of the arm
- B. A player shall be ejected from the game/field if:
 - i. In the opinion of referee, the player is guilty of fighting or uses foul, abusive, or improper language

Ball Out of Play:

- A. The ball is out of bounds when the whole ball passes over the whole sideline or goal line

Goalies/Keepers:

- A. Keepers may punt the ball. Once a Keeper has possession of the ball all opposing players must vacate the goalie box area and may not challenge the Keeper until he/she crosses the goalie box line.
- B. Goalkeeper will wear colors that distinguish him/her from other players

Code of Conduct for Coaches

Coaches shall remain unconditionally supportive of the LPAR's commitment to the ideals of good sportsmanship, team play, and the four character values: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Likewise, coaches shall remain sensitive to the physical and emotional well-being of the players on his/her team.

- Coaches will be positive role models.
- Coaches will display and instill in their players the principals of good sportsmanship and team play.
- Coaches will conduct themselves in a manner that best serves the interest of the players.
- Coaches will do their best to provide the players with a positive experience.
- Coaches will ensure that in winning and losing teams' will exhibit respect and good sportsmanship to opposing teams, players, spectators and all others.
- Coaches will treat all players, parents, spectators and officials with respect.
- Coaches will provide instruction in a manner that is constructive and supportive.
- Coaches will NOT ridicule or demean.
- Coaches will not tolerate behavior that endangers the health or well-being of a child.
- Coaches will comply with the decisions of league staff and officials and observe all rules, policies and procedures as established by the LPAR and coaches.
- Coaches will teach the sport to the best of their ability.
- Coaches will be drug and alcohol free while at any LPAR event.
- Ensure that the players' families, friends and associated spectators conduct themselves with sportsmanship and dignity at all times.
- Respect the coaches and other players of the opposing teams before, during and after the play of the game.

Coaches shall not...

- ❖ **Use abusive or profane language or gestures.**
- ❖ **Taunt or humiliate any other spectator, coach, league staff official or player.**
- ❖ **Question an official's call.**
- ❖ **Abuse, mistreat or mishandle any LPAR equipment or property.**

Violation of these rules may result in the removal from the facility and/ or remainder of the league

Code of Conduct for Spectators/ Parents

- The parent and spectator shall support the players, coaches, officials and league staff. Parents and spectators shall not “coach” or “officiate.” Parents and spectators agree as follows:
- Parents and Spectators will be positive role models.
- Parents and Spectators will display and instill in all players, the principles of good sportsmanship and team play.
- Parents and Spectators will conduct themselves in a manner that best serves the interest of the players.
- Parents and Spectators will do their best to provide the players a positive experience.
- Parents and Spectators will make certain that their children show respect for all other players, coaches, officials, league staff and spectators.
- Parents and Spectators will not ridicule or demean.
- Parents and Spectators will inform the coach of any disability or ailment that may affect the safety of their child.
- Parents and Spectators will treat all players, coaches, league staff and officials fairly and with respect.
- Parents and Spectators will comply with the decisions of the officials and observe all rules, policies and procedures as established by the LPAR and coaches.
- Parents and Spectators will respect the opponent and avoid any confrontation with opposing players, spectators, coaches or officials.
- Parents and Spectators will be drug and alcohol free while attending any LPAR event.

Parents and Spectators shall NOT...

- ❖ **Use abusive or profane language or gestures.**
- ❖ **Taunt or humiliate any other spectator, coach, league staff official or player.**
- ❖ **Question an official’s call.**
- ❖ **Abuse, mistreat or mishandle any LPAR equipment or property.**

Violation of these rules may result in the removal from the facility and/ or remainder of the league