

Soccer Rule Book



**“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
Proverbs 22:6**

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

The Catholic Youth League Board of Directors has chosen to implement what are known as “Small-Sided” games. Small-sided games are games played on smaller fields and with fewer players. Games of 3 vs. 3, 4 vs. 4, and 7 vs. 7 are examples of small-sided game numbers.

Here are some of the reasons that we believe that our young soccer players should play small-sided games:

1. Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become **more skillful** with it! (Individual technical development)
2. Because we want our young soccer players to make **more, less-complicated decisions** during the game! (Tactical development)
3. Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically **efficient** in the field space in which they are playing! (Reduced field size)
4. Because we want our young soccer players to have more individual teaching time with the coach! Fewer players on the field and fewer players on the team will guarantee this! (Need to feel worthy and need to feel important).
5. Because we want our young soccer players to have **more involved playing time** in the game! (More opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)
6. Because we want our young soccer players to have **more opportunities to play on both sides of the ball!** (More exposure to attacking and defending situations)
7. Because we want our young soccer players to have **more opportunities to score goals and make saves!** (Pure excitement)

The “Small-Sided” environment is a **developmentally appropriate environment** for our young soccer players. It’s a **FUN** environment that focuses on the **young soccer player**.

ADVANTAGES OF PLAYING SMALL-SIDED GAMES:

- More time with the coach
- Energetic workouts due to playing both offense and defense
- More efficient use of field space
- Matches can be played simultaneously across a full size field
- Children are physically more efficient in smaller space
- Children are actively involved for a longer period of time
- It takes less time to score a goal or advance to goal
- Greater success rate for the players

GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

The Catholic Youth League soccer program will follow the FIFA Laws of Game except for the items outlined in this rulebook. A more comprehensive set of soccer rules can be found at www.drblank.com/slaws.htm. Rules specifically stated here take precedence for CYL play

The purpose of the league is to provide education-based athletic activities for Catholic school children in grades K through 5. The objective is to promote fun, teamwork, self-esteem and spiritual growth to promote our Catholic community through family participation.

- All teams are co-ed.
- There are no try-outs and children play on teams with classmates from their schools.
- Each child plays a minimum of half the game and is welcome regardless of gender, skills, or ability
- Officials will explain all rule infractions to players.
- In the spirit of CYL, teams are not permitted to run up scores. Rotating player positions, requiring additional passing, and adjusting playing time to accommodate uneven competition is expected of coaches.

THE FIELD

Teams will occupy the same side of the field the entire game. Coaches must remain inside of their team box, which is from the center line to the top of the penalty box.

Spectators will occupy the opposite side from the team benches. At no time can spectators or coaches be behind the goal area or end lines.

The field and goal size will be determined by the logistics and layout of the available facilities.

THE BALL

Grades K, 1 & 2 will use a size #3 soccer ball. Grades 3, 4 & 5 will use a size #4 soccer ball. The teams playing are responsible for providing a game ball

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

K through 2nd grade will play with 4 players, and no goalie will be used (“4 vs. 4”). Good defense is encouraged, but no player should play an equivalent role of goalie, even if hands are not used (i.e. no pure “goal guarding” allowed). Players are not permitted to stand inside the goal box to defend the goal. To ensure maximum playing time for all, teams should consist of no more than 8 players. The recommended team size is 6 players.

3rd through 5th grade will play with 7 players, including a goalie (“7 vs. 7”). To ensure maximum playing time for all, teams should consist of no more than 14 players. The recommended team size is 12 players.

Sharing players to maximize playing time and even competitiveness is encouraged if one team has significantly more players present than the other. Exceptions to roster sizes must be approved by the League.

PLAYING TIME/SUBSTITUTIONS (SEE APPENDIX)

Substitutions may only be made at the end of each quarter to ensure a measurable and equitable period of playing time for each player. All players **MUST** play a minimum of two complete quarters, except in the following circumstances:

1. In cases of extreme exhaustion, injury or other medical condition that restrict play. A player who is bleeding must be removed from the game and can not re-enter until they are sufficiently bandaged. A substitute may be used while the injured player is being attended.
2. In cases of disruptive behavior, dangerous play, or poor sportsmanship (Yellow Card).
3. In cases of removal by the referee (Red Card).
4. In cases where the player has arrived after the second quarter of play was complete.
5. In cases where the player has disciplinary issues with the team, the coach, the school.
6. In cases where a team is scheduled to play a doubleheader, the team playing the doubleheader will be allowed to substitute players during their second game only. Substitutions can occur at the 5 minute mark of each quarter of the second game or as indicated by numbers 1-4 above.

Coaches that fail to follow the playing time rules are in violation of the CYL Code of Conduct and may be subject to disciplinary action. Coaches are encouraged the use of the game day lineup sheet at each game provided in the rule book appendix.

EQUIPMENT

For all practices and games, players must wear shin guards and molded soccer shoes or turf shoes. Baseball shoes/cleats are not permitted. No exceptions will be permitted.

Only the league provided shirts, shorts, and soccer socks should be worn for all games. All shirts must be tucked in and not altered (i.e. no names or numbers, cut-off sleeves, etc.). Goalies will wear a different color shirt or soccer bib from what the other players are wearing.

Players may not wear watches or jewelry or other non-soccer uniform items except for Medic Alert Labels that must be worn inside the jersey and taped to the body. The referee will be the sole judge as to what is unacceptable.

Hair control devices are allowed if made of soft material and not worn for adornment.

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

On game days, the teams playing the first game should assist the league director with setting up the soccer goals for their game. Teams playing the last game of the day should assist the league director with removal of the soccer goals from the field of play. The coach will seek the assistance of his team families with this task.

Coaches have complete and total responsibility for their team and fans. Coaches will be given one verbal warning. Coaches who are unable to control their fans and players will be penalized with a yellow card for the first infraction and a red card for the second infraction. A red card issued for this issue will cause the game to cease. **Any coach or spectator receiving a Red Card will be deemed to be in violation of the League's Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action and MUST LEAVE the facility immediately.**

The team must stay in its designated team area. A coach or player who goes into the other team's areas can be penalized. The head coach is allowed to have 2 representatives/assistant coaches in their team's bench area during the game. No more than 3 coaches/representatives permitted on the bench. **Only Diocesan FBI fingerprinted volunteers may be in the team area.**

Coaches shall never be on the field of play unless to officiate the game or called unto the field by the official. Teams and coaches shall remain one-yard away from the touch line(sideline) at all times during play.

The coaches, through their actions, are responsible for teaching the children how to deal with winning and losing a game. This includes how to deal with bad calls, difficult parents and other coaches. The league will remove a coach from his duties for inappropriate behavior that includes but is not limited to.

- Disagreeing with an official.
- A negative discussion of the game with the other coaches.
- A negative discussion of the game with parents.
- Inappropriately ending a game by not congratulating the other team or inappropriate behavior when congratulating the other team.

The use of obscenity, profanity or any inappropriate language by a player, coach or spectator is not permitted. Any such actions are deemed to be in violation of the League's Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action including immediate removal from the facility.

Concerns regarding players, parents or officiating must be handled via the phone on the following Monday by contacting their school's CYL director.

REFEREE

For K through 2nd grade teams, each team is responsible for providing a referee for the game in the event the league does not. Particularly in the younger grades, the referee is allowed to

instruct and encourage both teams appropriately. All referee decisions as well as any instructions and encouragement provided are expected to be equally beneficial to both teams (i.e. it's not legal to help only your own team).

Professional referees will be provided for 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teams.

REFEREE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the referee's responsibility to be in control at all times. The children are there to have FUN and learn the game of soccer. For all infractions the referee will explain what was done incorrectly, using a positive teaching approach. This means a portion of field time will be spent in positive coaching by the officials and correction of infractions of the rules.

The most common problem is excessive physical contact between two players, e.g. pushing and shoving. The referees must first tell the violators that this is not acceptable. If a problem continues, then the offending player carded by the officials and the offending player must sit out while the player's own coach discusses the needed adjustments. It is the referee's responsibility to be in control of the game and flow of play. Coaches have authority only over their own players. The referee can stop the game at any time to give aid to an injured player.

The CYL Director of the Day at the fields will have full authority to act on issues during game day.

END OF GAME PROCEDURE

All players and coaches must shake hands at the conclusion of every game. Failure to demonstrate sportsmanship may result in disciplinary action by the league to the offending coach and/or player.

METHOD OF SCORING

A goal is scored when the whole ball has passed over the outside edge of the goal line, between the goal post and under the cross-bar.

Teams cannot score on a throw-in or kick-off. Any infraction of the rules known to the referee and called prior to or during a goal will negate the goal.

Overtime is only played during tournament games.

“RUNNING UP” SCORES

The purpose of the league is to provide our children a place to learn about sports, have fun, engage in fair play, and respect the dignity of the other team.

At the point a team reaches a five goal advantage over their opponent, their opponent will be

allowed to add an additional player to the field for the remainder of that quarter. The player may remain on the field as long as the five-goal deficit remains.

CANCELLATION & BAD WEATHER

Games cancellations will be announced via the game day hotline (407-641-9768). The on-site CYL director or the professional official, if used, have the discretion on cancelling games. Any visible or audible sign of lightning or thunder will result in cancellation of play. If play has begun they will not be made up due to weather cancellation.

Teams are expected to attend all scheduled games regardless of conflicts and number of players. It is better to show with less than a full complement of players than to not show at all. Conflicts must be reported to the school's director not less than one full week prior to play.

SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY (Grades K – 2)

Game Duration: The match shall be divided into four (4) equal 10 minute quarters. There shall be a 2 minute break between quarters one and two and another 2 minute break between quarters three and four. **Should the heat index on game day reach 85 degrees or higher,** a 30 second water break will be permitted midway through each quarter, and breaks between quarters will be reduced to 1 minute. There shall be a halftime intermission of 5 minutes. The horn will sound ten minutes prior to the start of the next game, signifying the end of the game, regardless of the amount of time remaining on the clock. The clock will run continuously and is not to be stopped for any reason (i.e. no penalty time). It is imperative the games begin and end on time.

Start of Game: At about 10 minutes prior to game time, the officials will have both teams meet at center field to form two lines facing each other. The official will evaluate each player's equipment. Players with unsatisfactory equipment must correct the infraction or they will not be allowed to play.

Both teams and coaches will remain at mid-field to participate in the league prayer;

Dear Lord,

We thank you for our families, our coaches, our teammates, and our opponents who provide us an opportunity to compete. We thank you for the good health that allows us to play sports. We thank you for our parents, who make time to take us to practice and to our games. Who encourage us to try new things. We ask that you guide us in good sportsmanship so we may begin and end each game as friends. Lord, please watch over us and keep us safe.

In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

The referee will have the team captains face each other. The visiting team captain will call the coin toss. The team winning the coin toss will elect to take possession of the ball or not. The other team will decide which goal to attack. Teams will alternate possession at the start of each half, and will switch the goals defended at the end of each half.

Start/Restart of Play: The referee will confirm that each team has the correct number of players on the field and will signal the start of the kick-off with a single whistle. The game begins with a legal kick-off. Play after a goal is scored also resumes with a kick-off.

The game will start with the player taking a place kick. The ball will be stationary at center field. All defensive players must be a minimum of 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.

Prior to the kick-off, every player will be in their own half of the field and the opposing team will be outside of the center circle. A legal start or re-start of play occurs when the ball is kicked forward one complete revolution. The player starting the game with a kick-off cannot kick the ball again until another player comes in contact with the ball. A goal cannot be scored on a kick-off.

Ball In and Out of Play: The ball is out of play when it completely goes over the end line or touch line either in the air or on the ground and the referee signals by a whistle to stop play.

The lines on the field belong to the areas of which they are boundaries. The touch lines and end lines are part of the field of play. The lines creating the penalty and goal areas are part of those areas.

Offside: There shall be no offside penalties in this division.

Drop Ball: A drop ball will be used to restart the game when it can not be determined who last touched the ball before the ball last went out of bounds or when play has stopped by the official for other than an infraction (such as an injury).

The ball will be put back in play from a spot nearest to where play was stopped but no closer than four yards from the touch or end line. Opposing players will face each other, the referee will drop the ball between the players and each player will not touch the ball until it hits the ground.

Fouls and Misconduct: When a player commits a foul a direct free kick shall be taken from that point where the offense occurred. This means a goal can be scored directly from the kick without any one else touching the ball. The following offenses are considered fouls:

- A player kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
- A player trips or attempts to trip an opponent.
- A player jumps at an opponent.
- A player charges an opponent.
- A player strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
- A player pushes an opponent.
- A player tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.
- A player holds an opponent.
- A player handles the ball deliberately. It is not handling of the ball when the player is trying to protect him/her self or has incidental contact with the ball.
- A player plays in a dangerous manner.
- A player impedes the progress of an opponent.
- A player commits any other offense, not previously mentioned for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player.

Slide Tackles: **No slide tackles are permitted in CYL soccer in any grade.** Players should be encouraged to stay on their feet as much as possible. Repeated slide tackles by the same team will result in a red card for the coach of that team.

Yellow Card Procedure: A yellow caution card will be issued in the event of a serious violation of soccer or league rules. A player receiving a yellow card will be removed from the game for at

least 3 minutes. A replacement is allowed. In the event of a yellow card, a direct free kick will be awarded to the other team at the spot of the infraction.

Red Card Procedure: A red card will be issued in the event of a dire violation of soccer or leaguer rules, including repeating offenses previously subject to a yellow card. A player receiving a red card will be removed from the game for the balance of the day. A replacement will **not** be allowed. In the event of a red card, a direct free kick will be awarded to the other team at the spot of the infraction. **Any player, coach or spectator receiving a Red Card will be deemed in violation of the League’s Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action. Coaches or spectators receiving a red card MUST LEAVE the facility immediately.**

Free Kicks: All kicks are direct kicks and opponents must be at least 4 yards from the ball when it is put in play. Except the kick-offs to start and re-start play, all other kicks in CYL will be deemed “direct”, meaning the ball does not have to touch another player before scoring.

The following rules apply to all free kicks:

- A. The ball must be placed at the point of infraction.
- B. The ball must be stationary.
- C. The ball is in play when it moves a distance equal to its circumference.
- D. Opposing players must be a minimum of 4 yards away.
- E. If a player asks for opponents to move back, the kicker must wait for a whistle to begin.
- F. If a player delays the kick, he will be cautioned.
- G. The player taking the kick must not touch the ball again until another player touches it.
- H. A free kick will be retaken by the defense in their own goal box when the ball is kicked and it does not leave the goal box before someone else touches it.
- I. When a free kick is awarded for a yellow or red card the kick will be started by the referees whistle.
- J. Players can not score against their own team during a free kick. If the free kick that does not touch any other player results in an own goal, the other team will receive a corner kick.

Penalty Kicks: There are no penalty shots in this division. Fouls (hand balls, illegal contact, etc.) will result in a direct free kick at a point where the foul occurred, or 4 yards from the goal, whichever is furthest.

Throw-In: A throw in occurs in order to restart play after an out-of-bounds. The team that did not last touch the ball prior to it going out-of-bounds throws the ball into play. An improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once. The following rules apply:

- A. The thrower must face the field of play.
- B. Part of each foot must be on the touch line or outside the line.
- C. Both feet must be on the ground when the ball is released. A player can “drag” a foot.
- D. You must use both hands and throw the ball from behind and over the head.
- E. The ball is in play upon crossing the entire side line.
- F. The thrower cannot play the ball until it touches another player.

G. A goal can not be scored by a throw in.

Goal Kick: A Goal Kick is taken when the whole ball passes over the end line excluding that point between the goal post, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by the attacking team.

The ball shall be put back into play by placing it anywhere on the end line, one the side of the field where the ball went over the end line. The player kicking the ball cannot re-kick the ball until another player touches it (re-kick for violation). All opposing players must be a minimum of four yards from the ball.

Corner Kick: A corner kick will be awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal-line, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by one of the defending team's players. A corner kick is a direct free kick.

- A. The whole of the ball shall be placed in the quarter circle nearest the corner where the ball went out of bounds.
- B. The corner marker must not be moved or removed.
- C. A goal may be scored from a corner kick.
- D. All opposing players must be four yards from the ball.
- E. When the ball is kicked and travels its circumference then another player must touch the ball before the kicker can re-touch the ball.

The Goal Box: is directly in front of the goal. No player may touch the ball within

- A. The goal box, however any player may move through the goal box. Any part of the ball or player's body on the line is considered in the goal box.
- B. The player is an extension of the box. If a defender touches the ball in the goal box, a goal is awarded to the offensive team.
- C. If the defender or the ball is in the box and contact is made, a goal is awarded. If an offensive player touches the ball within the goal he box, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.
- D. If the ball comes to a complete stop in the goal box, regardless of which team touched it last, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.

SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY (Grades 3 – 5)

Grades 3-5 will use rules identical to those specified for grades K-2, except where noted below.

Game Duration: Identical to K-2 rule with the exception that ALL quarters will be timed by the referee.

Start/Restart of Play: Identical to K-2 rule with the exception that all players shall be a minimum of 10 yards from the ball until it is put in play.

Offside: There shall be no offside penalties for 3rd grade teams. However, players shall be discouraged from standing between the last defender and the goalie (“cherry picking”). In games involving 4th and 5th grade teams the offside law applies. The referee will provide a warning to the player and provide instructions as to proper positioning prior to calling a penalty.

If a player is declared offside, the referee will award the other team an indirect free kick which shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred.

Slide Tackles: **No slide tackles are permitted in CYL soccer in any grade.** Players should be encouraged to stay on their feet as much as possible. Repeated slide tackles by the same player will result in a red card to the offending player.

Free Kicks: Identical to K-2 rule, with the exception that all players shall be a minimum of 10 yards from the ball until it is put in play.

Penalty Kicks: A penalty kick is awarded for any fouls that occur within the penalty box. The referee will be responsible for placing players and explaining rules regarding penalty kicks.

Throw-In: Identical to K-2 rule, with the exception that an improper throw-in may not be re-taken. An improper throw-in will result in the other team receiving the ball for a throw-in from the same spot.

Goal Kick: A Goal Kick is taken when the whole of the ball passes over the goal-line excluding that point between the goal post, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by the attacking team.

The ball shall be put back into play by placing the ball anywhere on the goal box. If a team taking a goal kick will have two chances to get it out of the penalty area. If they are unable the opposing team will be given an indirect free kick at the point nearest the infraction outside the penalty area. The same will be awarded to defending team for a team encroachment of the penalty box before the ball leaves the area, if it is done more than twice. The player kicking the ball cannot re-kick the ball until another player touches the ball.

Corner Kick: Identical to K-2 rule, with the exception that all players shall be a minimum of 10 yards from the ball until it is put in play.

Fouls and Misconduct: Identical to the K-2 rule, with the following additions.

- A player handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper). It is not handling of the ball when the player is trying to protect him/her self or has incidental contact with the ball.
- A player prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hand.

APPENDIX

5 STRATEGIES TO GIVE EQUAL PLAYING TIME IN SPORT - PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY™

As a coach, playing time can be your biggest headache. It can be difficult to give each player fair playing time. However, the opportunity to participate in sports with meaningful playing time is essential to childhood development, confidence-building and overall athlete development. PLC believes strongly in the distribution of equal playing time in youth sports. We recommend at a minimum for 6th grade and below as close to equal playing time as possible and for 7th and 8th grade at least 25% playing time for all participants.

So how do you do that? Here are 5 strategies taken from the Play Like A Champion Today™ youth sport coaches manual:

1. **Communicate with your players and their parents.** Let your players and parents know your commitment to fair playing time and what they can expect throughout the season. Make sure your playing time commitments are explained to the parents at a pre-season meeting. The better you communicate up front, the less push back you will receive during the season.
2. **Plan ahead.** Prepare a detailed substitution pattern before each game. Set your line-ups to have the best chance to be competitive in each quarter, half, or inning. Don't "stack" certain line-ups to try to win – players pick up on this and might think of themselves as the "B Team." Make everyone feel like they are on the "A Team" and you will get the most out of every player.
3. **Stick to your playing time commitments,** regardless of the game situation. Is sacrificing a player's opportunity to have fun and feel accepted by his/her coach and team worth improving your record? You decide.
4. **If possible, have an assistant keep track of playing time;** this could be an assistant coach or a trusted parent. Recruiting some help will allow you to focus on game strategy and instruction of your players during the game.
5. **Take advantage of lopsided opportunities and give more time to your less-used players** (especially when equal playing time is not guaranteed). Don't wait for the other coach to do this. If he/she wants to play their stars the whole game then that is their problem. Also, make sure this isn't your only playing time strategy.

SAMPLE GAME DAY LINE UP SHEET

GAME DAY LINE UP SHEET CATHOLIC YOUTH LEAGUE SOCCER
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SCHOOL Good Shepherd COACH Jim Brown
 GRADE fourth DATE 9/12/2010

# of players	PLAYER NAME	QUARTERS PLAYED				COMMENTS
		1	2	3	4	
1	tom jones	X			X	Played 2 quarters
2	karen kicker		X	X		Played 2 quarters
3	elizabeth stricker	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	No show to game
4	billy block	X			X	Played 2 quarters
5	steve edwards		X	X		Played 2 quarters
6	carson palmer	X	injured	injured	injured	Played 1 qtr due to injury
7	frank olsen	X	X	X	X	Played 4 quarters
8	christy rodriguez		X	X	X	Played 3 quarters
9	timothy bank	X		X	X	Played 2 quarters
10	parker davis		X			Played 2 quarters
11	jackie rodriguez	X			X	Played 2 quarters
12	david gooding		X	X		Played 2 quarters

All players should play a minimum of half the game

GAME DAY LINE UP SHEET CATHOLIC YOUTH LEAGUE SOCCER

SCHOOL _____

COACH _____

GRADE _____

DATE _____

# of players	PLAYER NAME	QUARTERS PLAYED				COMMENTS
		1	2	3	4	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

All players should play a minimum of half the game