

Willard Recreational Soccer League Rules

Please remember this is a **recreational** soccer league. This league is structured to provide an enjoyable learning experience for participants at all skill levels. The officials will do their best to enforce age and division appropriate rules. If you have a question or concern, please contact Jason Knight at 742-2262.

Thank you for treating our officials with respect.

*Rules have been adapted from US Youth Soccer Rules.

Rules of the Game

Rule #1 Field of Play

Dimensions- The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The field used for Willard Recreational Soccer will have different dimensions than a standard field to suit the young ages of the participants.

Field Markings- The field of play is marked with lines. These lines belong to the areas of which there are boundaries. The two longer boundary lines are called touchlines. The two shorter lines are called goal lines. The field is divided by halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A center circle is marked around the center mark. The goal and penalty area are also defined at each end of the field. Within each penalty area, a penalty kick mark is made at a set distance from the midpoint of the goal posts and a penalty arc is drawn outside the penalty area.

Rule #2 The Ball

The soccer program will use a size 3 ball (23"-24") for all 3/4 year old divisions, and a size 4 ball (25"-26") for all other divisions.

Rule #3 Number of Players

The soccer program will play with the following number for each division:

3/5 will play with 4 players, no goal keeper.

6/7 years will play with 5 participants (1 goal keeper and 4 players on the field).

8/9 years old will play with 6 participants (1 goal keeper and 5 players on the field).

10+ years old will play with 7 participants (1 goal keeper and 6 players on the field).

Substitutions can take place only when play is stopped (goals, out of bounds, or injuries) and the referee says it is o.k.

Rule #4 Players' Equipment

A player cannot wear something that can hurt anyone on the field. (Example: jewelry: necklaces, bracelets, and/or football, baseball cleats, or metal spikes).

Basic Equipment- Willard Parks and Recreation requires all players to wear shin guards and footwear. A T-Shirt will be provided for all players and coaches. Soccer cleats or regular tennis shoes may be worn, but baseball and football cleats are forbidden.

Willard Parks will provide goalkeeper shirts and gloves.

Rule #5 Referees

Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the rules of the game in connection with the match to which they have been appointed. The decisions of the referee regarding facts are final.

Duties of the referee:

- Enforces the Rules of the Game.
- Keeps the official time of game.
- Stops play if there is a serious injury.
- Stops play if a player is guilty of a foul or misconduct.
- Controls all substitutions entering/exiting field.
- Requires a player to leave the field if the player is bleeding or has blood on the uniform.
- Make sure the field, ball, and player equipment are safe and legal.

Rule #6 Duration of the Game

3/5 years old and 6/7 years old will play 4 quarters 8 minutes in length. There will be a 2 minute break between quarters. Halftime will be 5 minutes in duration.

8-12 years old will play two halves that are 20 minutes in length. Halftime will be five minutes in length. All games will start at the scheduled time. Please have your players present and ready to play at the scheduled time.

Rule #7 The Start of Play

The referee will call for two captains to come to the center circle right before the game for a coin toss.

The team that wins the coin toss will choose ball or direction they wish to attack.

Teams switch ends of the field for the second half of the game. The team that didn't kick-off to start the first half kicks off to start the second half.

Kick-off requirements:

- From the center mark
- Each team in their defensive half of the field
- Players from both teams must be outside the center circle
- Ball is kicked and moves forward (into the other half of the field)

The player who takes the kick-off cannot touch the ball again until another player from either team has touched the ball.

Rule #8 The Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is always in play until: It completely leaves the field across the goal line or touch line or the referee signals for play to stop. The ball is still in play even if it hits a flag post, goal post, crossbar, or the referee.

Rule #9 The Method of Scoring

A goal is "scored" when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar. No score is kept. When a goal is "scored", the ball will return to center field for a new kick-off.

Rule # 10 Offside

3/5 & 6/7 No offside will be called.

8-12 Referees will warn players during the first game. Offside will be called beginning the second week.

An attacker is in an offside position if: when a teammate has the ball, the attacker is:

- Closer to the other team's goal than the ball, and closer to the other team's goal than the last defender other than goalie, and in the other team's end of the field.
- It is not illegal for a player to be in an offside position unless an attacker who is in offside position becomes actively involved in play by interfering with play or interfering with an opponent or gaining an advantage.

Rule #11 Fouls and Misconduct

These six fouls result in a direct free kick if the referee decides it was done carelessly, recklessly, or using too much force:

- Kicking
- Tripping
- Striking
- Jumping at an opponent
- Charging an opponent
- Pushing an opponent

The following fouls are direct free kick fouls:

- Tackling an opponent from behind
- Holding an opponent
- Spitting at an opponent
- Deliberately handling the ball with any part of the hand or arm
 - Only goalkeepers may handle the ball within their own penalty area.

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper in his own penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

- Touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not been touched by any other player.
- Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by his teammate.
- Wastes time
- Touches the ball with his hands after he or she has received the ball directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate.

Rule #12 Free Kicks

Free Kicks- Direct or Indirect:

- For Both direct and indirect free kick, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until another player has touched it.
- A goal will be awarded if a direct free kick is kicked into the opponents' goal.
- A goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal with an indirect kick.

Rule # 13 The Penalty Kick

A penalty kick is the way to start play again after a defender commits a direct free kick foul inside the defending team's penalty area.

The referee signals for the kick to be taken after:

- The ball is placed on the penalty marker.

- The defending goalkeeper is facing the field on the line between the goal posts.
- The kicker is identified.
- Everyone else is outside the penalty area and outside the penalty arc and behind the ball.
- The ball must be kicked forward to be in play.

The referee will order a penalty kick retaken if:

- A defender does something wrong and a goal was not scored.
- An attacker does something wrong and a goal is scored.
- If both teams do something wrong.

Rule #14 Throw-In

A throw-in is the way to restart play when the ball leaves the field by completely crossing over a touchline. The team, which did not touch the ball, last takes the throw-in.

- The thrower stands off the field behind the touchline.
- The ball is thrown over the head using both hands while the feet remain on the ground behind the touchline.
- The ball is in play as soon as it is released from the thrower's hands and enters the field.

Rule # 15 The Goal Kick

A goal kick is the way to start play again when the ball leaves the field across the goal line, last touched by an attacking player.

- Opponents must stay outside the penalty area until the ball leaves the penalty area.
- No one on either team can touch the ball until it is in play.

Rule # 16 Corner Kick*

A corner kick is a method of restarting play. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

- A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player on the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.
- The ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post. Opponents must remain at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play. A player of the attacking team kicks the ball and the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. The kicker may not touch the ball until another player has touched it.

*Players in the 3/5 and 6/7 age groups will use a throw in when the ball exits the field of play across the goal line.



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