



PLAYING RULES

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc.
201 Mistletoe Drive | P. O. Box 1213 ~ Stephenville, Texas 76401
info@stephenvillesoccer.com | www.stephenvillesoccer.com

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

SSA organizes teams for players ranging from U4 to U19 during both the fall and spring seasons. U4 through U8 teams compete in a league made up exclusively of SSA teams. For U9 through U19, teams with sufficient player registration participate in leagues organized through the North Central Soccer Alliance (NCSA), the Fort Worth Youth Soccer Association (FWYSA), or any other league the SSA Board finds suitable. U9 through U19 does require travel (not ALL games will be played in Stephenville).

Players are grouped by gender and placed into age divisions according to their age as of December 31 of the current soccer year, with teams assigned through a random draw roster process. The soccer year runs from September 1 to August 31.

Games typically take place once a week, usually on Saturdays, but Sunday or weeknight games may be scheduled for makeups or to accommodate other scheduling needs.

Teams have the option to stay together from season to season. Players who return for consecutive seasons can elect to remain on the same team.

Players who did not participate in the most recent season, but did participate in the season prior, *can request* to return to their former team. These requests will be granted if: (1) the team the player is requesting to return to has available roster spots, and (2) there are enough players in the player pool for that age group (excluding the requesting player) to form the appropriate number of teams, as determined by the commissioners to be in the best interest of all players in that group.

The commissioners for any age group have full discretion in deciding the appropriate number of teams for an age group.

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc. (SSA) follows the rules and guidelines established by North Texas State Soccer Association, Inc. (NTSSA), United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), United States Soccer Federation (USSF), International Football Association Board (IFAB), and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA).

BRIEF SUMMARY

FIFA is the global governing body for soccer, responsible for overseeing the Laws of the Game and ensuring consistency worldwide.

IFAB creates and maintains the global Laws of the Game.

USSF enforces those laws and provides oversight for soccer in the U.S.

USYSA oversees youth soccer in the U.S. and works with the USSF to ensure proper implementation of the laws at the youth level.

NTSSA is a regional entity under the USSF and USYSA that implements the rules locally while maintaining alignment with FIFA, IFAB, USSF, and USYSA standards

While adhering to the guidelines set by NTSSA, USYSA, USSF, IFAB, and FIFA, SSA implements specific rules and adjustments for each age division to support age-appropriate rules that enhance both enjoyment and functionality for players and families in our organization. As children grow, field sizes and rules evolve, progressively aligning with the standards of competitive soccer worldwide. The following is a summary of the playing rules for each age group. If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to suggest changes, please email our SSA board at info@stephenvillesoccer.com.



GENERAL INFORMATION

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| BALL SIZE | | |
|-----------|----------|---------------|
| U4 - U8 | U9 - U12 | U13 and above |
| Size #3 | Size #4 | Size #5 |

| MAXIMUM ROSTER SIZE | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| U4 - U8 | U9 - U10 | U11 - U12 | U13 - U14 | 16U and above |
| 8 players <i>6 recommended</i> | 12 players | 16 players | 18 players | 22 players |

| | NUMBER OF PLAYERS & GOALKEEPER | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| U4(Tots) | U5 - U6 | U7 - U8 | U9 - U10 | U11 - U12 | U13 and above |
| 3 v 3 | 4 v 4 | 5 v 5 | 7 v 7 | 9 v 9 | 11 v 11 |
| NO Goalkeeper | NO Goalkeeper | Goalkeeper Allowed | Goalkeeper Allowed | Goalkeeper Allowed | Goalkeeper Allowed |

| GAME LENGTH | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| U4 | U5 - U6 | U7 - U8 | U9 - U10 | U11 - U12 | U13 and above |
| 4 Quarters | 4 Quarters | 4 Quarters | 2 Halves | 2 Halves | 2 Halves |
| 5 Minute Quarters | 7 Minute Quarters | 10 Minute Quarters | 25 Minute Halves | 30 Minute Halves | 35 Minute Halves |
| No Overtime | No Overtime | No Overtime | No Overtime | No Overtime | No Overtime |



U4 PLAYING RULES

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc.

- Coaches or a designated, agreed-upon parent shall referee
- Half-time break | Five (5) minutes
- Quarter breaks | Three (3) minutes each
- 2nd and 4th quarters resume where the previous quarter ended
- Defending players may be inside their goal box to defend against a goal when the ball is in play on their side of the field, but must move out of the box when the ball is no longer in a position to be defended within that area
- Attacking players may enter the goal box to attempt a goal when the ball is in play, but must move out of the box and actively engage in play when the ball is no longer in a position to be played for a goal
- Attacking players must allow space for the defending player to take a goal kick by retreating (or attempting to retreat) to the midfield line
- All restarts are throw-ins (no kick-ins); allowed **one redo**
- All free kicks are indirect (opponent must be **3 yards** back from the ball)
 - the ball must touch another player before a goal can be scored
- Substitutions allowed as needed
- The following are **NOT** allowed:
 - NO Heading
 - NO Offside Calls
 - NO Penalty Kicks
 - NO Slide Tackles
 - NO Drop Kicks or Punting
- Coaches are allowed on the field during games to direct the players
- Parents are NOT ALLOWED on the field during games and are NOT ALLOWED to stand behind goals during games
- Shin guards must be worn under socks
- Players are NOT ALLOWED to wear jewelry (using tape or band-aids to cover jewelry is **not** permitted)



U5/U6 PLAYING RULES

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc.

- One center referee
- Half-time break | Five (5) minutes
- Quarter breaks | Three (3) minutes
- 2nd and 4th quarters resume where the previous quarter ended
- Defending players may be inside their goal box to defend against a goal when the ball is in play on their side of the field, but must move out of the box when the ball is no longer in a position to be defended within that area
- Attacking players may enter the goal box to attempt a goal when the ball is in play, but must move out of the box and actively engage in play when the ball is no longer in a position to be played for a goal
- Attacking players must allow space for the defending player to take a goal kick by retreating (or attempting to retreat) to the midfield line
- All restarts are throw-ins (no kick-ins); allowed **one redo**
- All free kicks are indirect (opponent must be **3 yards** back from the ball)
 - the ball must touch another player before a goal can be scored
- Substitutions allowed as follows:
 - Team's own throw-in
 - Either team's goal kick
 - After a goal is scored
- The following are NOT allowed:
 - NO Heading
 - NO Offside Calls
 - NO Penalty Kicks
 - NO Slide Tackles
 - NO Drop Kicks or Punting
- U5 ONLY | 1 coach per team allowed on the field for **ALL** games to direct players
- U6 ONLY | 1 coach per team allowed on the field for **first 3** games to direct players
- Coaches and/or parents are not allowed to stand behind goals during games
- Shin guards must be worn under socks
- Players are NOT ALLOWED to wear jewelry (using tape or band-aids to cover jewelry is **not** permitted)



U7/U8 PLAYING RULES

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc.

- One center referee
- Half-time break | Five (5) minutes
- Quarter breaks | Three (3) minutes
- 2nd and 4th quarters resume where the previous quarter ended
- Attacking players must retreat (or be attempting retreat) to the MIDFIELD LINE to allow space for the defending player to take a goal kick **OR** when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball (defending player or goalkeeper may delay play until attacking team retreats)
- All restarts are throw-ins (no kick-ins); **NO redo** allowed
- Goalkeepers must wear a jersey or pinnie in a color distinct from both their teammates and the opposing team
- All free kicks are indirect (opponent must be **8 yards** back from the ball)
 - the ball must touch another player before a goal can be scored
- Substitutions allowed, **with permission from referee**, as follows:
 - Team's own throw-in
 - Either team's goal kick
 - After a goal is scored
- The following are NOT allowed:
 - NO Heading
 - NO Offside Calls
 - NO Penalty Kicks
 - NO Slide Tackles
 - NO Drop Kicks or Punting
- Coaches are NOT ALLOWED on the field during games
- Coaches and/or parents are not allowed to stand behind goals during games
- Shin guards must be worn under socks
- Players are NOT ALLOWED to wear jewelry (using tape or band-aids to cover jewelry is **not** permitted)



U9/U10 PLAYING RULES

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc.

- Travel required to NCSA member association fields for games
- One center referee and two (2) assistant referees (AR)
- Half-time break | Five (5) minutes
- Attacking players must retreat (or be attempting retreat) to the BUILD-OUT (blue) line to allow space for the defending player to take a goal kick **OR** when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball (defending player or goalkeeper may delay play until attacking team retreats)
- Offside offense allowed ONLY between the build-out (blue) line and the goal line
- Goalkeepers must wear a jersey or pinnie in a color distinct from both their teammates and the opposing team
- Follow IFAB guidelines for the following:
 - Penalty kicks
 - Free kicks (opponent must be **10 yards** back from the ball)
- Substitutions allowed, **with permission from referee**, as follows:
 - Team's own throw-in
 - Either team's goal kick
 - After a goal is scored
- The following are NOT allowed:
 - NO Heading
 - NO Slide Tackles
 - **NO Drop Kicks or Punting**
- Coaches are NOT ALLOWED on the field during games
- Coaches and parents are NOT ALLOWED to stand behind goals during games
- Shin guards must be worn under socks
- Players are NOT ALLOWED to wear jewelry (using tape or band-aids to cover jewelry is **not** permitted)



U11/U12 PLAYING RULES

Stephenville Soccer Association, Inc.

- Travel required to NCSA member association fields for games
- One center referee and two (2) assistant referees (AR)
- Half-time break | Five (5) minutes
- Follow IFAB guidelines for the following:
 - Offside offense
 - Penalty kicks
 - Free kicks
- Substitutions allowed, **with permission from referee**, as follows:
 - Team's own throw-in
 - Either team's goal kick
 - After a goal is scored
- Heading is NOT ALLOWED
- Coaches are NOT ALLOWED on the field during games
- Coaches and/or parents are NOT ALLOWED to stand behind goals during games
- Shin guards must be worn under socks
- Players are NOT ALLOWED to wear jewelry (using tape or band-aids to cover jewelry is **not** permitted)

***Drop kicks and punting allowed*