



VHSC RULES FOR U-8 GAMES

FIFA Rules are followed with the following exceptions:

Players & Ball – The game is played Four vs. Four, with a goalie. Five players total from each team on the field. Size 3 ball will be used for U8.

Time – A game consists of two twenty minute halves with a 5 minute half time. Time runs continuously. Every five minutes, at a natural stoppage of play, the referee will call for subs. A natural stoppage of play is any restart (i.e. Goal kick, throw-in, free kick, etc.) The referee is responsible for keeping time, but may designate someone on the sideline to do this. Don't stop the game in the middle of play if time runs out; wait for a natural stoppage of play. Stop time only if there is a long stoppage, such as injury. Coaches can get together and decide before a game or at any time during the game to shorten the game for weather or other reasons, but must inform the referee. Coaches are responsible for stopping a game due to lightning. Play can not resume until at least 15 minutes has passed since the last sighting of lightning.

Kickoff – Start each quarter with a kickoff, alternating teams. Do not change sides after halftime unless *both* coaches request it. **A kickoff is indirect.** If the ball is kicked into the goal straight from a kickoff and no one else touches it, it is a goal kick for the defending team.

Indirect Kick - There are no direct kicks or penalty kicks, just indirect kicks. If an infraction occurs (tripping, pushing, handball) and the ball is placed down, the kicker can not kick it directly into the goal; it has to be touched by someone else first (from either team). If the ball does go directly into the goal, it is a goal kick for the defending team. If an infraction occurs very close to the goal, back the ball up outside the goalie box (if marked) or enough to give room for the defense to be in front of the goal but at least 10 yards away from the ball.

Throw In – **An incorrect throw-in is a re-throw, not a turnover.** At the beginning, only re-throw for incorrect arm motion (ignore the feet). Starting with week 5, obvious foot lifts will be called. The commissioners will discuss this if there are any problems.

Sidelines – The fields will be lined, so enforce the sideline. If necessary, ask the coaches to ask their parents to stop kicking the ball back in. For the player's safety, all spectators must be at least 1 yard back from the touch line.

Hand Ball – At the start of the season, only stop play and award a kick if a player catches a ball and holds it or picks it up. Starting with week 5, obvious touching will be called. The commissioners will discuss this if there are any problems. If a player gains an obvious advantage (knocks the ball down then kicks it in the goal), even during the first half of the season, call a handball.

Slide Tackle – No slide tackling is allowed.

Fallen Player - Any time a child falls around the ball and is in danger of being kicked or stepped on, stop play immediately. Restart the action by having a drop ball. Get two players, one from each team, close together and drop the ball between them.

Keeping Score - No official scorekeeping, but there is a four goal rule. If one team gets ahead by four goals, the other team can add a player. If the teams pull back to within two goals, the extra player should be dropped.

Goal Kicks – On a goal kick, the player can put the ball down in the goal box if marked or near on the end line where the goal box should meet the end line (either side of the goal). The referee often has to help with spotting the ball. The ball must travel 5 yards up field before anyone from either team touches it. **The defending team can be no closer to the ball than the half line when the goal kick is taken.** This allows the offensive team to receive the first. If the ball is touched before it travels outside the goalie box the goal kick will be retaken.



When the Goalie Picks the Ball Up – When the goalie puts his or her hands on the ball, the opposing players need to back away. They cannot kick the ball when the keeper has their hands on the ball. This will help to prevent any injuries. In the event that the opposing team kicks the ball when the keeper has their hands on it, blow the whistle and play a goal kick. Make sure that the guilty player understands that they cannot kick the ball when the goalie is touching the ball. When the goal keeper picks up the ball encourage them to run or walk to the top of the goalie box throw the ball. When the goal keeper picks the ball up, the opposing team needs to back up to half line just like a goal kick. If the keeper throws the ball before the other team gets to half line, then the ball is live and the opposing team can go after it. Good idea to tell you keeper to wait until the other team backs up to half line unless you want to run a fast break counter attack. That is up to you.

No Punting – When the goal keeper picks the ball up (inside the goal box) during the goal keeper must throw or roll the ball out to his teammates. They can do this immediately or wait until the other team backs up to half line. No punting will be allowed. Please work on positioning the player receiving the goalkeepers roll or throw about 10 yards away from the keeper on either side of the goal about 10 yards from the touch line. Ideally they do not try to throw the ball way down the field or down the middle.

Corner Kicks – The defending team must be at least 5 yards away from the ball at the start of the kick. The ball must be placed within 1 yard of the corner of the field but on the playing field before the kick is taken. Since all kicks are indirect a goal can not be scored directly on a corner kick. It must touch a player from either team before going into the goal in order to score.

Referees- Each team will provide a referee for one half of the game. The referee may be an experienced older sibling, a parent, or a coach.