

RULES FOR U4 - U8 DIVISIONS

THE FIELD:

All U4 through U8 practices and games shall take place on designated 3v3/4v4 fields using the appropriate goal sizes for those fields.

THE EQUIPMENT:

All U4 through U8 matches should use a size 3 soccer ball. All players must have shinguards that are completely covered by their socks. Soccer cleats are recommended, but tennis shoes with rubber soles are acceptable. Baseball and football cleats are prohibited. For matches, all players must have a jersey or like-colored pinnie indicating their team color.

Players may not wear sunglasses, necklaces, bracelets, watches, rings or other jewelry or accessories. Earring studs may be worn if covered by tape/bandages. Earrings of any other kind are not allowed. Bows, scrunchies and other hair accessories are permitted as long as they do not pose a safety risk to other players (at the agreement of BOTH teams' coaches). Winter hats and gloves are permitted, as are coats or sweatshirts worn UNDER a jersey. Hoods must be tucked inside a jersey. Baseball hats or other brimmed hats are not allowed.

THE PLAYERS:

For U4, U5 and U6 age groups, matchups will be 3v3. There are no goalies. No more than 3 players should be on the field for either team to start the game. Coaches should not play less than 3 players at any time during the game. If the goal differential is 5 or more, the team with fewer goals may add a player to the field.

For U7 and U8 age groups, matchups will be 4v4. There are no goalies. No more than 4 players should be on the field for either team to start the game. Coaches should not play less than 4 players at any time during the game. If the goal differential is 5 or more, the team with fewer goals may add a player to the field.

For all age groups, all players in attendance should play a minimum of 50% of the game unless a player or parent requests not to play when asked.

REFEREES:

There are no referees assigned to U4 through U8 games. All out of bounds, goal and foul calls should be made by coaches.

DURATION OF THE GAME:

U4-U6 teams should arrive at the designated game time. Each team should practice for approximately 20 minutes and play a 30-minute game consisting of three 10-minute periods with a 2-3 minute break between periods.

U7 and U8 teams should arrive 15 minutes prior to the game time. They should practice for 15-25 minutes and play a 40 minute game consisting of four 10-minute quarters with 2-3 minutes between quarters and a 5 minute halftime.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Substitutions may take place during any stoppage of play by either team.

OUT OF BOUNDS & GOALS

A ball is deemed to be out of bounds when the ENTIRE ball crosses the boundary line of the field. A goal is scored when the ENTIRE ball crosses the goal line.

KICKOFFS, FREE KICKS & RESTARTING PLAY:

Kickoffs take place at the start of each period at the center of the field. Teams should alternate kickoffs for the beginning of periods/quarter. All kickoffs are indirect kicks, and may not result in a goal unless touched by another player prior to crossing the goal line.

Free kicks will be awarded for playing fouls, including hand balls or intentional/unintentional balls played with the head. No headers are allowed under any circumstances. Any contact with the head, whether intentional or unintentional, results in a free kick for the opposing team. Any instance where a ball is played with the hand, or hands are used to make the players body larger to obstruct the path of the ball, will result in a free kick for the opposing team.

When a ball goes out of bounds on a sideline (touchline), play will be restarted by the team that did not touch it last. Play is restarted by either a pass or dribble into play.

When a ball goes out of bounds on the goal line, it will result in either a goal kick or corner kick, depending on the team that last touched the ball.

All free kicks, goal kicks, restart of play kicks, corner kicks and kickoffs are indirect kicks and may not result in a goal unless touched by another player from either team prior to crossing the goal line. The opposing team must remain a minimum of 3 yards from the kicker in each of these instances.

OFFSIDE AND GOALIES:

There is no offside in any U4-U8 match.

There are no goalies in any U4-U8 match. No player may be instructed to "Hang Back" in the goal area or tasked with goalie-like responsibilities. Players should be making reasonable attempts to play active defense.

SIDELINES - TEAMS AND SPECTATORS:

Spectators should watch the game from the opposite touchline (sideline) of the field from the teams and coaches. No adult that is not a coach of a participating team should be on the team sideline. When fields are adjacent to each other, teams should be on the abutting sidelines and spectators should be on the exterior touchlines.

Coaches may coach from sidelines or on the field, as appropriate for the development of their players. On-field coaches should not interfere with game play.

STANDINGS/RECORDS:

Northville FC does not track wins/losses/ties or other standings for U4-U8 divisions in the course of normal season play. .

ENFORCEMENT AND CHANGES:

Rules are enforced at the discretion of the participating coaches and by league officials, if there is not agreement between coaches. Rules may be updated and changed by Northville FC leadership at any time to ensure the safety and development of all participants.