

BRAINTREE YOUTH SOCCER

RULES OF PLAY (rev. 2026)

Braintree Youth Soccer will operate under FIFA rules and National Federation High School rules, except as specifically stated otherwise in these rules. The Executive Board of Braintree Youth Soccer will be the final authority covered by these rules of play or the adaptation of FIFA rules.

1. TEAMS:

1. No team can use a player not on the official roster unless agreed upon by division directors. A coach using a non-rostered player may be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Board. Playoffs is the exception where ONLY official rostered players will be allowed to participate.
2. Players should be on the field with their coaches at least 20 minutes before scheduled game time.
3. Grades 7-8 will play with 11 players (10 field players and 1 goalkeeper) for each team on the field of play. Teams must have a minimum of 7 players before a game can be played. If one team has fewer than 11 players, the team with the correct number of players is not required to reduce to the number of the lesser team.
4. Grades 5-6 will play with 9 players (8 field players and 1 goalkeeper) for each team on the field of play. Teams must have a minimum of 6 players before the game can be played. If one team has fewer than 9 players, the team with the correct number of players is not required to reduce to the number of the lesser team.
5. Grade 4 will play 7v7 (6 field players and 1 goalkeeper).
6. Grades 2-3 will play 6 v 6 (5 field players and 1 goalkeeper).
7. Grade 1 will play 5v5 micro soccer (4 field players and 1 goalkeeper).
8. Kindergarten will play micro soccer 4 v 4 (4 field players, no goalkeeper).
9. Coaches are required to play all of their players at least one half of the game during the regular season and the playoffs. If in a playoff game a game goes into extra time each player is required to play in at least ONE of the TWO extra time periods. Failure to comply with this rule in any game will result in a one (1) game suspension of the coach beginning with the next game that the team plays (this may extend into the next Fall season). Failure to comply a second time will result in the head coach being removed from the roster.

10. Coaches and teams are to take the same side of the field. Spectators must take the opposite side of the field. No coaches or spectators allowed behind the goal lines.
11. There will be no coaching from behind the goal area by either coaches, parents or other spectators.
12. Coaches & assistant coaches are to remain on their own sideline area. Sideline area is defined as the halfway line to the top of the penalty area. Or in the designated "technical area" drawn out by the league.

2. GAMES:

1. Ball Size:

1. **Mighty Minis/Kindergarten/Grade 1** : Size 3
2. **Grades 2-6** : Size 4
3. **Grades 7-8** : Size 5

2. Duration of Games:

1. **Mighty Minis/Kindergarten/Grade 1**: 25 minutes practice, 25 minutes game time
2. **Grades 2-4**: 25 minute halves
3. **Grades 5-8**: 30 minute halves
4. All games will be running time. Any stoppage will be at the discretion of the referee.
5. The referee will reserve the right to shorten any regular season game or half if in his/her judgment the game began late and will cause the next game to be delayed or that the game is deliberately delayed by a coach or player. The rules applicable to misconduct may be applied in this case.
6. The referee may add time to the game in order to compensate for injury time, etc., if there is sufficient time remaining in the time window for that game.

3. Substitutions:

1. Substitutions can be made by either team from the halfway line, with the consent of the referee, at the following times:
 1. Prior to a throw-in, if the team in possession of the ball substitutes.
 2. Prior to a goal kick.
 3. Prior to a corner kick, if the team in possession of the ball substitutes.
 1. No goalie substitutions are allowed on corner kicks.
 4. Prior to re-starts after goals.

5. After an injury by either team when the referee stops plays, both teams can substitute any number of players.
6. Prior to the re-starts for the beginning of the second half.
7. A player receiving a yellow card during a game MUST be substituted immediately. The opposing coach may substitute 1 for 1. The carded player may re-enter the game at the next substitution opportunity.
8. No substitution is allowed for a player ordered from the field of play for a red card.
9. No player shall leave the field of play without the consent of the referee.
10. The referee MUST be informed whenever there is a change in the goalkeeper.

4. Equipment:

1. All field players must wear a league jersey or one of similar color to their teammates.
2. Goalkeepers must wear a jersey of a different color or colors from both teams and the referee(s).
3. Shin guards
 - a. Shin guards are MANDATORY for all players, as required by the official Laws of the Game set by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and FIFA.
 - b. Shin guards are required of all players and must be worn UNDER a player's socks.
 - b. Shin guards MUST be size appropriate, so "baby/mini shin guards" are strictly forbidden.
 - c. Shin guards CANNOT be cut down, or altered, to make them smaller, as it compromises their ability, and violates regulations.
 - d. The use of makeshift shin guards from materials like cardboard, paper, Styrofoam, or trying to utilize another item in place of shin guards, is NOT allowed, and will be rejected by referees.
 - e. The rule ensures all players are treated equally and have the same required safety equipment, preventing any player from having an unfair advantage by skipping protection.
4. Mouth guards are allowed.
5. No baseball style hats or bandannas will be worn.
6. No earrings or jewelry of any kind will be worn. Jewelry expressing a medical condition is allowed.
7. Nothing will be used to tie up the hair if it is made of metal, plastic, hard rubber or has sharp edges.

8. ONLY soccer style footwear will be allowed during the games. "Soccer" footwear consists of soft toed footwear with rubber style cleats, indoor type soccer footwear or tennis shoes/sneakers. NO football, baseball, or any other footwear that has a cleat in the middle of the front toe box area. NO METAL cleats will be allowed.

9. No player will be allowed to participate if he/she is wearing a hard plaster cast under ANY circumstances, regardless of whether it is wrapped up to make it softer (bubble wrap, etc.).

10. No other dangerous equipment is allowed.

5. Postponement of Games:

1. For other than weather or field conditions, any teams wishing to postpone a scheduled game must:

1. Obtain agreement to postpone from the opposing coach at least ten days prior to the scheduled game and agree to a new date.

2. Inform the Grade Level Director of the postponement and the new date.

3. The Director will inform the Executive Board.

4. The Division Director, Referee Director and the Executive Board will have final approval.

2. In the event of electric and/or thunderstorms, the game shall be stopped immediately for the duration of the storm. A mandatory 20 minute waiting period will ensue Following the LAST lightning sighting in the local area. If the delay extends longer than 40 minute total, the game will be ended. If the game is halted due to weather conditions and cannot be restarted on the same day, the following rules apply:

1. **Regular Season**—if play is stopped after the second half kickoff, the score will stand and the game will be over. If the game is stopped in the first half of play, the game will be replayed in its entirety, only if there are makeup weeks available; otherwise, the game will not count.

2. **Playoffs**—if play is stopped after the second half kickoff, the score will stand to that point and the rescheduled game will commence with the second half kickoff. If the game is stopped in the first half of play, and rescheduled for a later date, the game will be replayed in its entirety.

3. COACHES:

1. DEFINITION: A coach is anyone designated as a Head Coach, Assistant Coach or anyone performing the function of a Head Coach or Assistant Coach. There is a limit of three (3) coaches per team that have CORI's checked and approved by the BYS Board of Directors.

2. No member of the BYS organization will be allowed to perform the function of Head Coach or Assistant Coach on more than two (2) teams without the expressed approval of the Executive Board.

3. Rules of Play: Each coach will be familiar with and honor these Rules of Play.

4. Set an Example: In order to foster, promote, and enhance youth soccer, all coaches are expected to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, teamwork, and mutual respect amongst themselves, and with referees, BYS officials and all players.

5. For the safety of all concerned, coaches must support and assist referees in maintaining order before, during, and after any games. Where lack of support has been reported, the Executive Board will investigate and take action. The referee is the sole judge on the field of play; his/her decision shall be final. Protests based on referees' decisions will be dismissed.

6. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their team members as well as parents and spectators. A yellow or red card issued by a referee against a parent or spectator will be assessed against the coach of that team.

4. CONDUCT:

1. Good Sportsmanship: The primary goal of BYS is to experience and exercise good sportsmanship. All coaches, referees, parents, spectators, and most importantly, players are expected to encourage and promote good sportsmanship.

5. MISCONDUCT:

1. **Yellow cards** (cautions) may be given to a player or coach for any of the following infractions:

1. Persistently infringes on the laws of the game.
2. Dissents from referee's decisions.
3. Is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. Any coach or player receiving three yellow cards in a regular season will result in a one game suspension to be effective the next scheduled game.
5. Any coach or player receiving a total of two yellow cards within the same game is equal to a red card and the team will play short for the remainder of the game.
6. There will be no review for a yellow card.
7. Any player receiving a yellow card will be required to be substituted out, and wait until the referee has approved them to return to the field of play.

2. **Red cards** (disqualifications) may be given to a player or coach for the following infractions:

1. Committing violent conduct or serious foul play.
2. Deliberate use of foul or abusive language (referees will police and act as appropriately to remove players from field temporarily or dismiss them if necessary).
3. Persisting in misconduct after being cautioned.
4. Violations of the "breakaway rule".
5. Flagrant fouling of a goalkeeper who is in control of or in possession of the ball in the penalty area.

3. The issuance of a Red Card will result in an automatic ejection from the game with no substitution allowed. The team will play short for the remainder of the game. The ejected offender **MUST** vacate the field area.

4. The Issuance of a Red Card will result in a one game suspension effective with the next scheduled game that team plays. The recipient of the Red Card will not be allowed at the field area for the duration of the suspension.
5. All red card incidents will be subject to review by the Executive Board.
 1. A request for review of a red card may be made to the Executive Board. The request for review must come from the coach within 24 hours of the game. A written account of the red card incident must accompany the request for review.
 2. In the event that no review is held before the next scheduled game is played, the suspension will be in effect.
6. Any player or coach who receives two red cards during the regular season will be expelled from the league for the remainder of the season pending a review by the BYS Executive Board.
7. Playoffs—A yellow card received during the season will be removed from a player's or coach's record when the playoffs begin.
 1. Any coach or player receiving one yellow card in one playoff game plus another yellow card in the next scheduled playoff game will result in a one game suspension effective with the next scheduled playoff game that team plays.
 2. Any coach or player receiving two cards in the same playoff game will result in an ejection from the game with no substitution allowed.
 3. Any coach or player receiving a red card during a playoff game will result in an ejection from the game as well as a one game suspension effective with the next scheduled game that the team plays. There will be no substitution for the ejected player.

6. PLAYING RULES:

1. All FIFA rules will apply to any situation not covered by BYS rules.
2. To start play, the ball is kicked and moves in any direction; the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
3. **FREE KICKS: Direct or Indirect**
 1. In any free kick awarded to the defending team within its own penalty area, the ball must move at which point it is deemed a live ball. All players from the now defensive team **MUST** be clear of the penalty area.
 2. Any free kick awarded to the defending team in its own goal area may be taken from any point in their own goal area. (This includes goal kicks.)
 3. In any free kick, the original kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player from either team. (This also includes kickoffs.)
4. The following infractions will result in a **DIRECT FREE KICK** (a kick that can go directly into the opponent's goal without having to be touched by another player). The kick is awarded from the spot of the infraction.
 1. Pushing or holding an opponent.
 2. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent.

3. Tripping or attempting to trip an opponent.
4. Violent charge.
5. Playing the ball with hands or arms (except for the goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area).
6. Serious foul play.
7. NOTE: ANY OF THE ABOVE INFRACTIONS COMMITTED BY THE DEFENSIVE TEAM INSIDE THE PENALTY AREA WILL RESULT IN A PENALTY KICK FOR THE ATTACKING TEAM.

5. The following infractions will result in an **INDIRECT FREE KICK** (a kick that must be touched, with the ball being kicked and clearly moving, by another player before it can go into the goal). The kick is awarded from the spot of the infraction, except when the infraction takes place in the 18 yard box; all INDIRECT FREE KICKS awarded within the penalty area will be restarted from the point where the ball entered the penalty area closest to the infraction. All opposing players may not be closer than 8 yards from the ball to be put in play.

1. Offsides.
2. Charging.
3. Dangerous play.
4. Too many players on the field.
5. Double touch by a kicker on kickoffs or free kicks or a thrower on a throw-in.
6. Obstruction.
7. Kicking or attempting to kick the ball while it is in the goalkeeper's possession.
8. Illegal handling of the ball by goalkeepers (see restrictions on goalkeepers).
9. Slide tackling of any kind.
10. The offside rule will be strictly enforced from the fifth through the eighth grade.

6. The following instances will result in a drop-ball (Per the Laws Of The Game, drop-balls are uncontested drops of the ball to a player on the team who was in possession of the ball at certain stoppages of play) when something other than normal gameplay stops it.

1. Injury on the field.
2. Bad weather.
3. Spectator/other outside agent entering the field.
4. A player swears, or otherwise uses abusive or foul language on the field.

7. **RESTRICTIONS ON GOALKEEPERS**

1. A goalkeeper must release the ball within eight seconds while taking as many steps as he/she wants. This will be enforced from fifth grade through eighth grade.
2. A goalkeeper will not parry (slap) the ball intentionally and then play it again with his/her hands until it has been touched by a

member of the same team outside the penalty area or a member of the opposing team either inside or outside of the penalty area.

3. On any occasion when a player deliberately passes a ball to his/her own goalkeeper by means of kicking, the goalkeeper is not permitted to touch the ball with his/her hands. The result of this infraction is an in-direct free kick from the edge of the penalty area from the direction of which the ball entered the area.

7. BRAINTREE YOUTH SOCCER RULES MODIFICATIONS FOR 7 V 7 AND 6 V 6

1. There will be no offside violations in 2nd grade. Offside will be called in 3rd and 4th grade where players are *clearly offside* on their offensive side of the field.

2. A ball put into play from a goal kick or a kick or throw from the goalkeeper must be touched by a player or the ground before it crosses the halfway line. If it does not, an INDIRECT FREE KICK will be awarded at the point the ball crossed the halfway line. Goal kicks will be taken from within the goal area.

3. Penalty kicks will be taken from twelve yards out. Everyone but the kicker and the goalkeeper must stay outside the penalty area, and at least 8 yards from the ball.

4. On all restarts (corner kicks, kickoffs, direct and indirect kicks), opposing players may not be any closer than 8 yards until the ball is played.

5. EVERY PLAYER MUST COME OUT OF THE GAME AT LEAST ONCE EACH HALF (EXCEPT THE GOALKEEPER). COACHES ARE REQUIRED TO PLAY ALL PLAYERS AT LEAST HALF OF THE GAME.

6. All INDIRECT FREE KICKS awarded within the penalty area will be restarted from the point where the ball entered the penalty area closest to the infraction. All opposing players may not be closer than 8 yards from the ball to be put in play.

7. FIELD DIMENSIONS:

1. An acceptable range for field size is thirty to forty-five yard wide and fifty to seventy yards long.

2. The penalty area shall be fourteen (14) yards from each goal post and fourteen (14) yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.

3. Downsized goals will be used which should be approximately twelve feet wide and six feet high.