

City of

Lathrop

PARKS & RECREATION

WE C.A.R.E.

Creating Active Recreation Experiences



YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE ***RULE BOOK***

2025

YOUTH SOCCER

LEAGUE OVERVIEW

DIVISIONS:

5-6

7-8

TEAM ROSTERS:

Rosters will be limited to no more than 12 players.

PLAYERS:

- Each team will consist of no more than 4 players and 1 goalie and no less than 3 players and 1 goalie at the start of each game.
- **EVERYONE** on each team will play and **EVERYONE** will play an equal amount of time on the field. Coaches use their discretion as to how to ensure playing time for each participant. The intent is to provide all participants equal playing time regardless of skill level or experience. It is the role of the coach to help ensure that every child plays and has a positive experience.

COACHES AND SPECTATORS:

- **Volunteer Coaches:** All coaches are volunteering their time to make this a great experience for all our participants. Each coach attends a Coach's Clinic and must adhere to the skills and curriculum provided to them by the City of Lathrop and affiliated agency. All coaches review the league concussion protocol before each season. Coaches sign a Code of Conduct and agree to support and influence good sportsmanship, high moral standards and are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. We are always looking for coaches and parent volunteers. If you are interested, please contact the Recreation Department. If you have any questions or concerns about a coach or curriculum, please notify the Recreation Coordinator.
- **Referees:** The referees are in charge of the game and their decisions are **FINAL**; right or wrong. The referees may occasionally stop play for instructional purposes when necessary, and will subjectively make allowances (as discussed and set up by each league) based on ability, for violations. We encourage parents to focus on the children and not the referees.
- **Spectators:** Please cooperate with the Youth Sports staff in creating and maintaining an environment in which each participant may have fun, learn the game, and practice good sportsmanship. As a spectator, you are not allowed to approach the coach or team's bench during a game. If you need to speak with a coach, please wait until the completion of the game. All players, water bottles, and spectators shall remain at least 6 feet from the sidelines at all times during the game. No spectators will be permitted along the goal lines or behind the goal.

Spectators' Code of Conduct:

As a spectator, we hope to provide a fun and rewarding experience for you and your child. In order to achieve our goal, we ask that you pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following the Spectators' Code of Conduct:

- **I will** encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports events.
- **I will** place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- **I will** insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- **I will** support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- **I will** remember that the game is for youth - not for adults.
- **I will** do my very best to make youth sports fun for the children.
- **I will** help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, abiding by league rules, or assisting with other league activities.
- **I will** demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- **I will** ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.

The City of Lathrop staff reserves the right and **WILL** send home anyone (this includes: coaches, players, spectators) who are in violation of the rules and regulations set by the program for the health, safety, and welfare of all participants.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

As a parent/guardian of players in our leagues, we want you to know we appreciate your help and leadership. We suggest you get involved on your child's team to make the experience more enjoyable for them whether it be bringing a snack, water, fruit, or giving high fives, the kids DO appreciate you being there!

OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

Players on Field	4v4(not including goal- ie)
Maximum Roster	12 players
Goalie	1 goalie per team
Off sides, Heading, Direct or Penalty Kicks	NO
Ball Size	5-6 Division: Size 3 7-8 Division: Size 4
Game Time	4 quarters 10 minutes each
Half Time	3 minutes
Overtime	NO Overtime
Field Sizes: 5-6 Division 7-8 Division	25yds x 15yds 30yds x 25yds
Referees	1-2 refs

Rules may be subjected to change. If so, coaches will be notified right away.

START OF GAME:

Game begins with a coin toss from the referee. The Away team will get to decide first on heads or tails. The coin toss will decide who has possession of the ball for the first half. The team that does not have possession of the ball beginning of the game will have possession of ball beginning the 2nd half.

5-6 Division

- Kickoff happens at the center-point of the field and occurs to start each half and after a goal is scored. All opposing players must be on their half of the field and outside their half of the center circle. Once the ball is touched, the opposing players may enter the center circle and the game begins. The person taking the kickoff is only allowed to touch the ball once before someone else touches it. For example, it is customary to start the game with a pass to a teammate. The person cannot dribble the ball forward, because that would be taking more than one touch to start the game. A goal may not be scored directly from a kickoff . Teams will **NOT** exchange sides after the half time break.

7-8 Division

- Kickoff happens at the center-point of the field and occurs to start each half and after a goal is scored. All opposing players must be on their half of the field and outside their half of the center circle. Once the ball is touched, the opposing players may enter the center circle and the game begins. The person taking the kickoff is only allowed to touch the ball once before someone else touches it. For example, it is customary to start the game with a pass to a teammate. The person cannot dribble the ball forward, because that would be taking more than one touch to start the game. A goal may not be scored directly from a kickoff . Teams **WILL** exchange sides after the half time break.

TIME:

All Divisions

- All Divisions will play four 10 minute quarters. (One minute break).
- Halftime will be 3 minutes (if time permits).
- Time continuously runs unless ref decides to stop clock.
- NO Timeouts
- NO Overtime

SUBSTITUTION:

All Divisions

- The coach must request permission from the referee prior to making a substitution. The substitution may occur at the beginning of the quarter, after a goal has been scored, during your own team's throw in or if there is an injury.
- No substitutions allowed during corner kicks.
- **There is unlimited substitutions, however, ALL players must play at least 15 minutes in each game. No player is allowed to play the full game. Coaches must make sure each child has equal playing time. *This rule will be strictly enforced.***

SCORING:

5-6 Division

- The 5-6 Division will **not** keep score.

7-8 Division

- Score will be kept. A goal is awarded when the ball completely crosses over the goal line and falls inside of the goal frame at either end of the pitch. Score will stop being taken if the score differential is 10+ points.

COACHES:

All Divisions

- Coaches can only travel within the assigned areas. Coaches should not be moving all over the field.
- There can be no more than two coaches on the sidelines. All other coaches, parents, siblings and/or fans must be in the stands and away from the sidelines.
- Any comments made to the referees or the staff should be made before the game, at halftime, and/or after the conclusion of the game.

DROP BALL:

All Divisions

- A drop ball will be used to resume play if the injury was not the result of a foul. The coach shall drop the ball between two opposing players who will vie for the ball. The ball must hit the ground before either player kicks it.

FOULS:

All Divisions

- If a foul occurs in the course of play, the ball is awarded to the other team out-of-bounds.
- Players will not foul out of a game unless the officials or city staff feel the fouling is excessive and could be a risk to other players. At which point the player may be disqualified without warning.

Reasoning for Fouls:

- **Handball:** Any player other the goalie who intentionally touches the ball with his/her hand or arm to gain control of the ball is whistled for handball and opposing team takes possession of ball.
- **Kicking:** Purposely kicking another opponent.
- **Tripping:** After a player fails to make a successful tackle and takes out the opponents legs instead of knocking the ball away.
- **Jumping:** Involves jumping or lunging at an opposing player.
- **Charging:** When a player charges into an opponent with an intent to harm. If the contact is incidental, charging doesn't apply.
- **Charging from behind:** A player may never knock an opponent to the ground by charging from behind.
- **Striking:** Any attempt to strike, or the actual striking of an opponent, is never allowed. This includes intentionally throwing the ball at an opposing player.
- **Holding:** Players cannot grab an opponent's jersey to slow him/her down or stick out their arms to obstruct the player's movement in any way.
- **Pushing:** Players cannot push, shove, or nudge an opponent in an effort to gain any type of advantage.

NO Penalty Kicks

THROW-INS:

5-6 Division

- When the ball crosses the sideline during the course of action, play comes to a brief stop. The team that knocks the ball out of bounds loses possession, and its opponent gets to throw the ball in to start play again. The player must use both hands to throw the ball and keep his/her feet on the ground. He/She is not allowed a running start or a jump in the air to try to get more force during the throw in. A goal may be scored on a throw-in ONLY if any player, same or opposite team (including goalie) touches the ball before it enters the goal.

CORNER KICKS:

7-8 Division

- When a team knocks the ball past its own goal line, the opposing team is awarded a corner kick from the corner arch on the side of the field where the ball went out of play. During the kick, defensive players must be at least 10 yards from the player kicking the ball, while the teammates of the kicker may choose to position themselves anywhere they choose.

OUT OF BOUNDS:

5-6 Division

- If ball goes out of bounds on **sidelines**, players of the opposing team the ball went out on, will throw-in the ball from the sides. If ball goes out of bounds on the **end line**, goalie of the opposing team the ball went out on, will goal kick the ball in to another player. Players of the opposing team must be 2 yards back from the penalty box.

7-8 Division

- If ball goes out of bounds on **sidelines**, players of the opposing team the ball went out on, will throw-in the ball from the sides. If ball goes out of bounds on the **end line**, players of the opposing team the ball went out on, will corner kick on the nearest corner the ball goes out of bounds on. Ball gets placed on corner.

Youth Soccer Terminology

Center Circle	This circle is 10yds from the center spot. It keeps opponents 10yds from the ball when kick off happens.
Touch Lines	These are the “sidelines” of the field, also referred to as the end lines, and the goals are positioned directly atop the lines.
Corner Areas	A quarter-circle with a radius of 1 yard marks off four small corner areas to indicate exactly where the ball must be placed for corner kicks.
Halfway Markings	The halfway line runs across the center of the field as is primarily used for the opening kickoff. During kickoffs, each team is required to stay on its half of the field. The middle of the halfway line is marked by the center mark, which is where the ball is placed for kick offs. Surrounding the center mark is the center circle. When a team is kicking off from there, opponents must stay outside the center circle.
Goal Areas	These rectangles are directly in front of each goal and measure 10ft in width and 8 feet in depth. Besides indicating where the ball is placed for goal kicks, it’s the area of the field where goalies have some shelter and are partially protected from collisions with opposing players.
Penalty Areas	This area is the larger rectangle that surrounds each goal area. The goalies can handle the ball when it’s inside the penalty area or goal area.
Goalie/Keeper	<p>This player positions themselves between the goal posts and stands a few yards out from the goal line. Their number one responsibility is to defend their team’s goal and prevent the ball from going into the net. They have 6 seconds to release the ball. The goalie cannot use their hands if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The goalie has picked up the ball and then placed it on the ground. They may not pick the ball up again until another player has touched it. 2. The goalie receives an intentional pass from their own team. 3. The goalie receives the ball from a throw-in from their own team. The goalie may only pick up the ball if it is in their defensive goal box.
Forwards	These players are counted on to score the goals for the team. When the team has possession of the ball, these players move forward and look to receive passes from the halfbacks that they can use to deliver quality shots on a goal.
Fullbacks	These players play in front of the sweeper and provide primarily defensive help. The primary responsibility for fullbacks is to ensure that players from the opposing team don’t get close enough to take quality shots. Fullbacks are also known as stoppers.
Halfbacks/Midfielders	Halfbacks are also known as midfielders. These play between the fullbacks and forwards, and provide both offensive and defensive support. During the games, the center of the field is where a big chunk of action usually takes place.

Goal kicks	Goal kicks are used when a player knocks the ball out of bounds over the opponent's goal line. If a player on Team A takes a shot on Team B's goal but misses, and the ball sails over the goal line without anyone touching it, Team B takes possession of the ball in its own end with a goal kick.
Handball	Soccer is played primarily with the head, chest, legs, and feet—not the hands. No other players besides the goalie are allowed to touch the ball with their hands in the field of play. Also, this includes any part of the arm below the armpit.
Kickoff	Kickoff happens at the center-point of the field, and occurs to start each half. All opposing players must be on their half of the field and outside their half of the center circle. Once the ball is touched, the opposing players may enter the center circle and the game begins. The person taking the kickoff is only allowed to touch the ball once before someone else touches it. For example, it is customary to start the game with a pass to a teammate. The person cannot dribble the ball forward, because that would be taking more than one touch to start the game.
Tackle	To use the feet in attempting to take the ball from an opponent's feet. A tackle may be accompanied by a legitimate shoulder charge, but there must be no holding, pushing, tripping, elbowing, or hip-checking. Clean tackling -- the ability to strip the ball from an opponent without fouling -- requires considerable skill.
Ball In And Out Of Play	For the ball to pass out of play, all of it must be outside all of the sideline or goal line (the lines can be up to five inches wide). Thus, a ball on the line is in play. Even a ball resting on the ground just outside the line is in play if any part of it is projecting over the line. Similarly, a goal is not scored until all the ball has passed over all the goal line. The position of the player controlling or dribbling the ball does not matter -- he can be standing or running with both feet outside the touchline, but as long as the ball is in play the game goes on.
Out of Bounds	The ball is out of play when it completely crosses the goal line or sideline -- whether it is on the ground or air. The team gaining possession is responsible for getting the ball
Heading:	When a player hits the ball with their head to move it in a certain direction. HEADING IS NOT ALLOWED.

FOOD/SNACKS:

- If snacks are provided for teams by team parents, snacks should be eaten after the game. We ask that you please throw your trash in the designated areas in order to help keep the Fields clean.

EQUIPMENT & JEWELRY:

- Shin guards are MANDATORY. Socks must be worn completely over the shin guards.
- Cleats are allowed. (No Toe or Metal Cleats)
- Jerseys should be tucked in.
- No jewelry (which includes: dangling earrings, necklaces, bracelets, watches, etc.) shall be worn during games. This is to help ensure the safety of all participants.
- **Exception:** Taping a band aid over piercings will be allowed.