

Capital Soccer Alliance (CSA) U10-U12 Program Playing Rules

The Capital Soccer Alliance is fully committed to providing a friendly, positive, supportive atmosphere for all of its participants.

Section One: Home Teams

Home teams are listed first on the schedule and are responsible for the following:

- A. Conditions of the grounds, proper field markings, nets and corner flags.
- B. Changing to an alternate colored jersey or using pinnies when uniform colors are similar.
- C. Goalie uniforms should be distinct from either team.
- D. Provide a completed game card generated from Got Sport to the center referee. NOTE: having multiple copies can be helpful.
- E. Retrieve the completed game card from the referee after the game (unless there has been a send off or a dismissal) and drop it off at their club's designated location.
- F. Provide at least three (3) fully inflated game balls of the appropriate size.
- G. Access to restroom facilities is recommended.

Section Two: Head Coaches for Both Teams

On game day, both coaches are responsible for the following:

- A. Behavior of their teams and spectators. Please refer to each respective club's Code of Conduct. *Note: the referee may stop the game to warn coaches and if necessary, may terminate the game if the problem persists. Coaches may be dismissed by the referee without warning by showing the coach a RED CARD. If a coach is dismissed, the game may continue only if there is an official (registered, approved) assistant coach or other approved coach to continue coaching. If no official coaches are available, the game will be terminated. Final disposition of dismissed coaches will be determined by the Penalties and Discipline Committee (PAD).*
- B. Home team will have preference to which side of the field will be the home side for their team and spectators. The visiting team and their spectators must use the opposite side of the field. *Note: when space or safety considerations do not allow for this, the home team will designate which side both teams and their spectators will occupy.*
- C. NOTE: For U12, ALL spectators on the sideline must stay to the left of the bench area. NO spectators may be behind the AR.
- D. NO spectators may be behind the goal lines.
- E. Verify the game time, location and directions to the field by checking the website before the scheduled game.
- F. Report the final game score within 24 hours to the scheduling website.
- G. **Coaches must stay within the build out lines in U10 and within ten (10) yards of the mid line in U12.** Instructing players is only to be done by official (listed on the official team roster or in possession of a valid coach pass) coaches. Only official coaches are allowed in the bench area.
- H. Anyone instructing a player who is not an official coach of the team may be asked to leave the field by the referee or the team's head coach.
- I. No artificial noise making devices are allowed. Those using the device may be asked to leave the field by the referee or head coach.
- J. Both coaches are expected to have the games start on time.
- K. Coaches must respect and accept a referee's decision regarding the concussion protocol.
- L. Coaches are responsible for their team's trash – please pick up after your team and spectators.

Section Three: Players for Both Teams

- A. In lieu of player passes, CSA coaches will have an CSA approved roster with player names and birthdates. No player whose name does not appear on the roster may play in the game. Any attempt to insert an ineligible player into the game will result in the head coach being suspended for the remainder of the season. All coaches will provide the referee with an official roster to be used for player check in.
- B. All player uniforms must have CSA approval. CSA uniforms may not have any other logo other than the club logo. When teams from the same club are playing each other, the home team must wear pinnies or may wear an alternate jersey that has been approved by their club president.
- C. All players are required to wear shin guards. Shin guards must be completely covered by the sock. Any style soccer shoe is acceptable unless otherwise deemed unsafe by the referee. This includes sneakers and tennis shoes as permitted by the referee.
- D. No jewelry (including but not limited to earrings, necklaces, bracelets, watches, etc.), hard plastic /metal hair clips, hair bands or hair beads may be worn by any player on the field. Exceptions for religious items/medical alert items will be made. Those items must be covered and secured to the body by tape or pre-wrap. NOTE: earrings must be removed; taping them is not sufficient. Hard casts or braces with plastic or metal in them may not be worn.
- E. Players with long, artificial nails must either remove the nails prior to the game or wear soft gloves to avoid injuring other players.
- F. All players must play at least half of the game. Only if the player's coach notifies the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of a scheduled game that a player (identified by jersey number) will exceptions be allowed.
- G. Any team delaying the start of a scheduled game by more than fifteen (15) minutes without sanction of the proper authority shall forfeit the game by a score of 1-0.
- H. **GUEST PLAY:** Teams that are short players for a game (e.g. having only the number of players on the field available plus 1 for a game (8 for U10 and 10 for U12) are allowed to have guest players of the same gender, from the same club and the same age group. The coach with guest players must inform both the opposing coach and the referee prior to the game. Guest players may only be used under these circumstances. Guest players may not be used to "stack" a team with high level players or take the place of available rostered players. Guest players may be written in on the game card and must be noted as guest players.
- I. No modifications of the rules are allowed for CSA play games regardless of age group.

Section Four: Spectator Line

For the safety of the players, all spectators must be behind the spectator line which will be a minimum of twelve (12) feet back from the touch line. Some fields may not have this line marked. If a spectator line is not marked, all spectators still must be twelve (12) feet back from the touch line. All pop ups, umbrellas and chairs must be back the full twelve (12) feet as well. No parent or spectator shall be behind the goal area of either team.

Section Five: Sportsmanship Rule

In order to promote respect and good sportsmanship, as well as to keep the atmosphere fun and friendly, the acceptable winning margin is a goal differential of six (6). Intentional own goals may NOT be used to mitigate the goal differential. Consequences for an intentional own goal,

no matter how it impacts the final outcome will be as listed below. Teams that exceed that acceptable goal differential of six (6) will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

- A. **First Offense in the Current Season:** 1. The coach receives a warning from their club president or manager. This warning will be documented in writing and distributed to the full CSA leadership team. 2. The result of the game will be converted to a loss for the team that exceeded the acceptable goal differential.
- B. **Second Offense in the Current Season:** 1. Automatic one game suspension for the coach whose team exceeded the acceptable goal differential. To be served in the next game of the season. In the case of a second violation at the last game of the current season, the suspension will be served at the first game of the following season. The coach will be notified of this suspension via a form letter/email sent by the CSA leadership team. The coach may not attend the game in any capacity. 2. The result of the game will be converted to a loss for the team that exceeded the acceptable goal differential.
- C. **Third Offense in the Current Season:** 1. Automatic one game suspension for the entire team that exceeded the acceptable goal differential. To be served in the next game of the season. In the case of a third violation at the last game of the current season, the suspension will be served at the first game of the following season. The coach will be notified of this suspension via a form letter/email sent by the CSA leadership team. 2. The result of the game will be converted to a loss for the team that exceeded the acceptable goal differential. 3. The game that the team is prohibited from playing will be recorded as a 1-0 victory for the opposing team. 4. The CSA leadership team will review the team's continued participation in CSA league play.

Section Six: Referees

- A. Referees are provided by the home team and/or club for all games scheduled on their fields.
- B. Referees should not begin the game until the game card is completely filled out.
- C. Referees shall check in players for U10 and U12 by calling out names on the CSA approved roster and asking each player their birthdate to confirm identity.
- D. If a referee is not present, the visiting coach may elect to play with volunteers from the spectators with the approval of both coaches OR to re-schedule the game.
- E. The replacement referee(s) accepted by both teams' authority cannot be challenged once the game begins.
- F. U10 games will be officiated by a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of two (2) referees.
- G. U12 games will be officiated by a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of three (3) referees.
- H. The referee is the sole authority on the field and his /her judgment as to acceptable field conditions, conduct of the coaches and spectators and any other prerogatives as granted by the *Laws of the Game* shall not be challenged.
- I. It is the responsibility of the referee to provide completed game cards at the conclusion of the game. *Note: only if a red card has been issued will the referee keep the game card at the conclusion of the game.*
- J. Referees are to follow the US Club concussion protocol.

Section Seven: Penalty Kicks

- A. For U10, penalty kicks will be taken from eight (8) yards back from the goal line.
- B. For U12, penalty kicks will be taken from ten (10) yards back from the goal line.
- C. The goal keeper must not be touching the goals, cross bar or nets.
- D. The goal keeper must not be moving.

- E. The goal keeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken. The keeper may not stand behind the line.

Section Eight: Goal Kicks

- A. U10 goal kicks will be taken from anywhere at the top of the goal box (the small 6 yard box). Same team players may be within the penalty box (the large box). The opposing players are to remain behind the buildout line until the ball is kicked.
- B. U12 goal kicks will be taken anywhere in the goal box (the small 6-yard box). Opponents must remain outside the penalty box (the large box) until the ball is in play.
- C. The ball is in play once the kick is taken; it can be played by either team before leaving the penalty box (the large box).

Section Nine: U10 ONLY: The Build Out Line

For the U10 (7v7) game, the field will include build out lines to promote individual skills and facilitate game flow by allowing play of the ball out of the back in an unpressured setting. The build out line is equidistant between the mid line and the top of the penalty box line on each side of the field.

- The build out line is equidistant from the top of the penalty box to the mid line on each side of the field.
- When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the closest build out line.
- **As soon as the goalkeeper has the ball, he or she has a choice:** hold the ball and wait for the opposing team to retreat behind the closest build out line, or release the ball by throwing it, rolling it or placing it on the ground and kicking it. Punting or drop kicking is not allowed.
- **NOTE 1:** IF the goal keeper chooses to immediately place the ball on the ground to be kicked, or throw the ball, the opposing team may attack as soon as the ball is kicked or thrown, even if the ball is in the penalty box area. to play from the back. This rules adheres to the spirit of that.
- **NOTE 2:** IF the goal keeper chooses to wait to put the ball into play, the opposing team **MUST** retreat behind the build out line and wait to attack until the goalkeeper has **actively** played the ball by throwing it or kicking it. This includes placing the ball on the ground in order to kick it. If in this scenario, the goal keeper chooses to place the ball on the ground and is preparing to kick it, the opposing team must wait until the ball is kicked before they attack. The purpose of the build out line is to give teams the opportunity to play from the back. This rules adheres to the spirit of that. This is specific to CSA. In other leagues, including comp, players may attack the ball as soon as it is placed.
- If the goal keeper punts or drop kicks the ball, the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick at the spot of the infraction. If the infraction occurs in the goal box, the ball is moved parallel to the goal line until just outside the goal box. The indirect kick is taken from there.
- If the opposing team fails to retreat behind the build out line, the referee will delay play until they comply.
- **NOTE:** Off side is not called in between the two build out lines (the middle of the field). Off side is called at either end of the field, between the build out line and the goal line.
- **GOAL KICKS;** the ball must be placed on the top of goal box. Kicking team players can be in the penalty box. Opposing team must be behind the buildout until the ball is kicked.

Section Nine A: U10 ONLY: There will be no slide tackling in U10 play. Should a slide tackle be called, the result is an indirect free kick for the opposing team at the spot of the infraction.

Section Ten: U10 and 12 New (in 2026) Goalkeeper Time Limit Rule:

U10: to adhere to the idea of having U10 teams learn to play from the back, goalkeepers will have 6 seconds to release the ball after gaining control. Referees will use hand motions to signal the countdown. The countdown will **not** begin until the GK has complete control of the ball, is ready to release it and the opposing team has retreated behind the buildout line. NOTE: the goalkeeper may still decide to release the ball immediately. The keeper has that option and in that case, the opposing team does not have to retreat behind the buildout line and there is no need for a countdown.

U12: Similar to the U10 rule, U12 goalkeepers will have 6 seconds to release the ball after gaining control. If the GK chooses to wait, the countdown does not begin until the opposing team has cleared the penalty box.

U10 & U12: Failure to release the ball within 8 seconds, will result in a corner kick for the other team.

Goalkeepers now have a maximum of eight seconds to release the ball after gaining control. Failure to do so will result in a **corner kick** for the opposing team.

Section Eleven: Off Side

- Offside will be applied to all U10 and U12 games as per the USSF guidelines. NOTE: In U10, off side is not called in between the two build out lines (the middle of the field). Off side is called at either end of the field, between the build out line and the goal line.

Section Twelve: Heading

There will be NO heading for age groups U10 and U12. When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Section Thirteen: Head Injuries and Concussions

All teams must observe the USSF concussion policy. If a player has a head injury and the referee deems that the player should NOT continue, then that player shall not return until they have received medical clearance. The referee MUST fill out an incident report if they remove a player from the game due to concussion protocol.

Section Fourteen: Game Start and Length of Games

- A. Coin toss by referee will be used to start a game. The team that wins the coin toss chooses which side to attack.
- B. Games will be played in two halves with a rest period between halves. Length of rest period is determined by age group. Under certain weather conditions the referee has the authority to allow for additional minutes as deemed appropriate.
- C. The second half of the game is started with a kick off by the opposite team from the team that kicked off the first half.
- D. U10 are two (2) twenty five (25) minute halves with a ten (10) minute rest period between halves.
- E. U12 are two (2) thirty (30) minute halves with a ten (10) minute rest period between halves.

Section Fifteen: Minimum Players Per Team In Order to Begin The Game

- A. U10 will play with a minimum of five (5) players.
- B. U12 will play with a minimum of six (6) players.

Section Sixteen: Inclement Weather/Poor Air Quality/Excessive Heat

- A. With regard to rain, all CSA Clubs will abide by the City of Sacramento Field Status Hotline. In the event of inclement weather, all participants are encouraged to call the hotline to find out field status. The hotline is updated by 7:00am on Saturdays. Every effort will be made by CSA Leadership to make the decision regarding play by 7:00pm the Friday before. Please note that this may not always be possible.
- B. In the event of poor air quality, 130 is the AQI number to use in determining CSA league wide game cancellations. This number applies to all CSA and Super Rec age groups: U10-U19.
 - a) If the AQI is 130 at 7:00am all games are cancelled.
 - b) Each club will use an average of 2 or 3 AQI sources in conjunction with other data points (forecast, map appearance and wind direction/forecast) to determine their recommendation/decision. There is some flexibility in the 130 at 7:00am cut off point.
 - c) Each club might on occasion have a situation unique to their area whereby they may cancel at a lower AQI reading. E.g. localized grass fire near a field or visible/smell of smoke in an area. Those cases may not need to impact the entire league. Those decisions will be communicated via the Saturday morning group text or at any point in the day when the need to cancel arises.
 - d) Should air quality worsen throughout the day, each club or referee has the discretion to cancel remaining games. Coaches also have the discretion to cancel. We will communicate any cancellations via group text to all club presidents.
 - e) We will convene via group text at 6:45am on Saturday to discuss and decide how to proceed that day. Our goal is to have a decision by 7:00am.
- C. With regard to excessive heat:
 - a) 95-102 degrees: add extra water breaks. NOTE: Natomas initiates a mandatory water break protocol at 90 degrees. Water breaks will be minimum of one during each half. Duration of the break is at the referee's discretion.
 - b) A temperature of 103 or above at game time results in a cancellation.
 - c) NOTE: Referees have the discretion to cancel a game for what they believe is excessive heat. This may differ from the aforementioned 103 degrees. Some referees might cancel if their game is forecast to be in excessive heat. They may not wait until game time and have the authority to do this. The referee's word is final.
- 1. With regard to rescheduling games:
 - a) Every effort will be made to have all teams play in at least 10 games during the season. However, make up games can be a huge logistical challenge to schedule and will not be offered in the 2022 season. **As such, 10 games are not guaranteed.**

Section Seventeen: Dogs

No dogs are allowed near the PLAYING field at games. Dogs cannot be on the sidelines. Parents will be asked by either the coach or the referee to leave the playing area which includes where spectators are.

IMPORTANT: Alcoholic beverages at the field/park are prohibited at any time before, during and after the game.