

# ARROWHEAD YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

## U8 FALL LEAGUE RULES SUMMARY FOR COACHES



- Each player present must play a minimum of half of the game except in the case of injury or discipline.
- All teams must have adult supervision. **All coaches must be registered with AYSA and have completed the background check and all required certification trainings.**
- The coach is responsible for controlling the behavior of his/her team's players and fans.
- Five players on the field for each team, one must be a goalkeeper. Maximum of 10 players on the roster. Teams are coed.
- There is no referee; coaches supervise the game. We encourage coaches to be on the field with the players to assist and encourage.
- Your team can use U6 players from your club if your team will not have enough players for a game. You cannot use U8 players from another team to help. U8 players can play up to U10 in the same club.
- No tobacco use allowed at fields, in surrounding areas, or parking areas during AYSA activities.

### Game Cancellations

Game cancellations due to weather or field conditions will not be determined until 3:30 P.M. each day. For **coaches**, game cancellations will be announced on the AYSA Hotline. The AYSA Office Hotline number is **624-1713**. **This line is available to coaches and referees only.** On any day that games on any field are cancelled, there will be an announcement on the AYSA voicemail system after 3:30 P.M. If you do not hear a cancellation message on the voicemail, assume your game will be played. For players and parents, game cancellations will be posted on the AYSA website after 3:30 P.M. Please inform parents and players to check the website on days of doubtful weather. The website address is [www.arrowheadsoccer.com](http://www.arrowheadsoccer.com). Because there are no referees at U8, coaches can mutually agree to cancel, even if the website or hotline message says games will be played. Remember, weather can change quickly, so coaches have the last word on cancellations.

**Because technology can be inconsistent, we strongly recommend that coaches contact team families when games are cancelled. Please discourage parents and players from using the AYSA hotline. We have three incoming phone lines at AYSA, and the lines can fill quickly. Encourage your parents to check the website or wait for your call.**

### Lightning

Coaches should stop play if they see lightning. Coaches should also stop play if they hear threatening thunder. Players, coaches, and spectators should leave the field and move to their vehicles. Coaches can restart play if it appears that the lightning passed over the area, and if at least fifteen minutes has passed since the last appearance of lightning. Coaches should cancel the game if the weather is too hazardous for players and coaches to remain in vehicles at the site.

### Heat and Water Breaks

Coaches should impose water breaks, shorten, or suspend games due to dangerously high heat. Teams with an inadequate number of substitutes may request and receive a two-minute running time water break in each half of a game. This request must be made prior to the start of the game.

### Field Safety

Coaches should check the field for playability prior to games and practices. This includes ensuring that goals are anchored.

### Team Colors

Coaches should check the uniform color of the opponent prior to the game. Home teams are responsible for wearing alternate colors. U8 teams play other teams in their club often, so having a full set of pinnies or an alternate color shirt is a good idea.

### Equipment

Both Home and Away teams should have a suitable game ball available. Home team should provide the game ball. U8 uses a size 3 ball. Players cannot wear or use any equipment or clothing that would likely risk injury to others. **No jewelry, even if ears were just pierced!** All eyeglasses shall be secured by an elastic band or strap. A player will be allowed to wear a cast only if it is well padded and will not constitute a risk of injury to the player or others.

**Games are considered complete if cancelled after the first half of play has been completed.**

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## U8 RULES AND HELPFUL INFORMATION



Players at the U8 level have a more organized set of rules and procedures than they had at U6. It is also the start where the game has a greater emphasis on player decisions than the coaches. However, at this age level, coaches need to instruct players as to the basics of play and this guide provides some insights that may help the coach.

**Length of Game:** U8 games consist of two 22-minute halves. At the beginning of the second half, teams switch the side of the field they are to defend.

**Players on the Field:** 5 players on the field for U8, one of whom must be the goalkeeper.

**Kick Off:** Players seem to think that a kickoff must be a kick to the other team. The only requirement is that the kicker must kick the ball forward or backward and cannot kick the ball again without someone else touching the ball. The next player to touch the ball can be a member of your team. Two common strategies are either your player kicks it as far down the field as possible typically to one side or the other or a short pass forward towards one of your other players.

**Goal Kick:** If the team that is attacking your goal kicks the ball past the end line without any of your players touching it, it is a goal kick. The goalkeeper does not have to take the goal kick. Anyone on your team can take the goal kick. The ball is placed by whoever is going to take the kick on the white line that forms the penalty area for U8. The ball is kicked while it is on the ground. **Opponents must remain in their defending half until the ball is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker cannot play the ball again until it has touched another player.** The defending players can stand anywhere. Remember that at this age players typically have limited range as to how far they can kick the ball. The distance someone can kick the ball as well as the direction the ball should be kicked should be worked on in practice.

**Corner Kicks:** If the defending team, including the goalkeeper, touches the ball before it goes out of bounds across the goal line then a corner kick is awarded to the offensive team. Your players should remember that goal kicks are always done by the team who has the goalkeeper on that side and corner kicks are always taken by the team that has the goalkeeper on the other side of the field. Any player on the offensive team can take the corner kick; and just like goal kicks, players this age have limited range as to how far they can kick the ball. In addition, once the corner kick is taken, the player taking the kick cannot kick it again until another player has touched the ball.

**Free Kicks:** When there is a foul, a coach may stop play (by blowing a whistle) and the team whose player has been fouled is allowed to take a free kick from the spot where the foul occurred. In U8 soccer, these kicks are always **indirect**, meaning that the ball must touch a player to count if it goes into the goal. **There are no penalty kicks in U8 soccer.**

**Ball Out of Bounds:** The ball is out of bounds when it totally crosses the line. If the ball goes out of bounds on the sideline, then the throw-in is given to the team that did not touch the ball last. Any player on the offensive team can take the throw-in and just like kicks, players at this age have limited ability to throw the ball very far. The outcome of a game never rests with who gets to make the throw-in and usually the defensive team takes possession of the ball either at the throw-in or within seconds of the restart.

**Heading:** No U8 players are allowed to deliberately head the ball in a game or in practice. If a header occurs in a game, stop play and have the opposing team take an indirect free kick from the spot the header occurred. If the header was not deliberate, you can continue playing. Most headers at this age are not deliberate but it is helpful to remind the players that heading the ball is not allowed at this age.

**Substitutions:** At this age level, you can make substitutions at any throw-in, goal kick, injury, half time or after a goal is scored. Substitutions are not allowed on free kicks or corner kicks. Substitutes must enter the field at the halfway point when the player that is coming off the field is almost to the halfway line. Try to follow this rule, if possible, to get the players ready for substitutions at the U10 level with referees.

**Team Formations:** At this age level, most teams have a goalkeeper, two defensive players, and two offensive players. The two defenders start behind the two offensive players at a kickoff. Have all players stay involved in the play even when it is at the other end of the field. Encourage defenders to move up if the ball is near the opponent's goal and have the attackers drop back and help the defenders when the ball is close to your own goal. You may play any formation you choose but most teams keep the formations simple at this age and rotate the players between offensive and defensive positions.