

2026 Lower Cape Recreational Soccer League

RULES AND INTERPRETATIONS

Grades 3 & 4

separate boys' and girls' teams
#4 soccer ball and 6 ft. x 12 ft. goals or cones
Field Size: approximately 60-70 yards x 34-40 yards (general guide)
players per side: 7 players, including the goalkeeper (7 vs. 7)

Grades 5 & 6

separate boys' and girls' teams
#4 soccer ball and 6 ft. x 12 ft. goals or cones
Field Size: approximately 60-70 yards x 34-40 yards (general guide)
players per side: 7 players, including the goalkeeper (7 vs. 7)

BASIC RULES

NO jewelry, watches, earrings (**NO TAPING EARRINGS, MUST REMOVE**)
NO casts or war paint
NO heading in practice or games
Shin guards must be worn by all players, including the goalkeeper
The goalkeeper must wear a different colored jersey or pinnie than other players on the field. Goalie gloves are suggested but not required.
The HOME team must wear scrimmage vests/pinnies when both teams have the same-colored jerseys/shirts.
In the event of inclement weather, decisions to cancel will be made by 8 am.

LENGTH OF GAME

Grade 5 & 6	two 25-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time
Grade 3 & 4	two 20-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time

PUTTING BALL INTO PLAY: At start of game and half time alternate which team kicks the ball to start play. The ball must first rotate forward one ball width before being touched by another player. ("Do over" if this is not done correctly) After a goal is scored, the team that was scored upon puts the ball back into play at the center of the field, ensuring the ball first rotates forward before being touched by another player. ("Do over" if this is not done correctly)

SUBSTITUTIONS: after a goal, either team's throw-in, injury, and at the time of an awarded goal kick

OFFSIDES: A player is in an offside position when there is no defender between the player (without the ball) and the goalkeeper, and the offside player is gaining an advantage from that position. (potential to score interpretation)

THROW-IN: If the ball goes completely over the sidelines, whether on the ground or in the air, the team that last touched the ball concedes a throw-in to the other team. Proper form is encouraged. The player performing a throw-in must have two feet planted on the ground at the time of the throw-in, releasing the ball with two hands from above the head.

At the grades 5 & 6 level, the referee will whistle the ball dead for an improper throw-in, and demonstrate proper form once for each team, and give each team one opportunity at a second chance using proper form. Thereafter, the ball will be awarded to the other team.

At the grades 3 & 4 level, the referee will whistle the ball dead for an improper throw-in and demonstrate proper form, giving said player a second chance to use proper form.

GOAL KICK: If the ball goes completely over the end line, whether on the ground or in the air, off the feet of the attacking team, the defending team puts the ball into play with a goal kick on a hash mark determined by the official or official mark on the field. The ball must leave the penalty area before being touched by any other player.

CORNER KICK: If the ball goes completely over the end line, whether on the ground or in the air, off the feet of the defending team, the attacking team puts the ball into play with a corner kick, taken from within the corner quadrant. Because we do not use corner flags, the actual corner will suffice.

PENALTY KICKS: (Only applied at the 5th & 6th grade level)

A penalty kick is awarded when a defensive player fouls an offensive player within the defensive team's penalty box. At all other levels, if a foul occurs in the penalty box against the offensive team, the ball shall be put into play by an indirect kick from the nearest point of release just outside the penalty box.

INDIRECT KICKS: (Only applied at the 3rd & 4th-grade level) A free kick awarded at the time of a rule infraction or violation, which must first touch another player from the same team before going into the goal. The ball is placed at the point of the infraction and must be stationary.

Violations / Rule Infractions Defined:

The following violations are ordinarily cause for a penalty/direct kick, but please remember to take an indirect kick at the 3rd and 4th grade level: *deliberate* handball, pushing, kicking, striking, holding or tripping an opponent, or attempting to do any of these.

An indirect kick is caused by the following violations: obstruction (running in the path of an opponent attempting to play the ball), dangerous play, offsides, and other technical offenses such as unsportsmanlike conduct, entering or leaving the field of play without the referee's permission, and dissent.

HANDBALLS: A handball is only whistled when it is *deliberate*, or it affects possession of the ball. If a handball is used by a field player to deliberately stop a goal from scoring, it shall be an automatic goal providing the referee can easily & clearly determine that the ball would have scored a goal if untouched. If there is any doubt in this regard, the result shall be a penalty kick at the grades 5 & 6 level or an indirect kick at the grades 3 & 4 level, with the offensive/attacking team taking an indirect kick from the nearest point of relief outside of the penalty box.

GOALKEEPER PRIVILEGES: The goalkeeper may use his/her hands to stop the ball, unless the ball is deliberately passed back by a team-mate. If that occurs, the goalkeeper must use his/her feet to redirect the ball. The goalkeeper may use his/her hands on headed balls, throw-ins or inadvertently touched balls. The goalkeeper may clear the ball either by throwing it or by drop-kicking the ball.

GAME TIME REQUIREMENTS: All coaches must stay with their team on the sideline of the field in their designated area. Spectators are to remain in designated game viewing areas and are not allowed to stand directly behind/next to the goal.

PLAYING TIME & POSITIONS: All players should be getting equitable playing time. This means that no player is playing the entire game, each player must play in both game halves, and each player must start ½ of the scheduled games. No player should be playing a designated position for the entire season.

**PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE A PARENT SIGN OFF ON THE DESIGNATED COVID AGREEMENT BEFORE THE SEASON STARTS. PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH TOWN MAY DIFFER.*