



Soccer Association of Montgomery Recreational Rules of Play Maryland SoccerPlex Rules & Conduct Policy

All SAM rules herein are final. Questions or concerns may be brought to the attention of the league commissioner by a team official (head coach, assistant coach or team manager).

All SAM participants shall practice good sportsmanship, fair play, safety and sound fundamentals at all practices and games.

The program director and/or the Rules and Disciplinary Committee reserves the right to remove any coach or player whose conduct is considered detrimental to the best interest of SAM.

***SAM rules are based FIFA Laws of the Game with modifications.
Modifications are specified below.***

Playing Time

All players are required to play a minimum of 50% of every game. It is recommended that no player play more than 50% of the game as a goalkeeper.

Lopsided Rule

When a team reaches a five-goal (5) lead the opposing team will be allowed to add another player. When a team reaches a nine-goal (9) lead they will pull one of their players off the field.

Equipment & Uniforms

All players must wear shin guards under their soccer socks. Cleats are recommended but not required. Metal cleats are not permitted.

Jerseys should be tucked in at all times.

Safety eyewear is mandatory for those players requiring prescription lenses.

All jewelry, including pierced earrings, must be removed (no rings, bracelets, necklaces, etc.)

Long hair may be tied back with soft “scrunchies” or rubber bands. Hard clips and accessories are not permitted.

Field Equipment

All equipment is to be left as it is set-up. Goals are not to be moved, laid-down or stood upright. If you feel there is a problem with the positioning of a goal, please contact SAM Soccer at 301-528-1480 and someone will verify the positioning and move the goals if required.

Only in situations where small-sided games immediately follow PeeWee games, should PeeWee goals be moved off of the field and laid down. PeeWee goals must only be moved by SAM coaches.

Rosters & Age Divisions

Players are not permitted to play on two (2) SAM teams within the same age group in the same season. Players are not permitted to “play-up” more than one age group. Players are not permitted to “play down”. (*Extenuating circumstances that would result in an exception to this rule may only occur with approval from the league administrator.*)

Coaches are not to recruit players from other teams. They are also not to add/drop players from their team without involvement of the program coordinator. All rosters are created by SAM, not coaches.

Only registered players listed on the roster may play in games.

Minimum Number of Players

Teams must be ready to play at the scheduled kickoff time. The minimum number of players required to play is listed below in the age-specific rules. If teams do not have the minimum number of players, they will be granted a ten (10) minute grace period. If the minimum number of players is not present after the grace period, that team will forfeit the match.

Carded Players

Players possessing a player card (MSYSA or US Club Soccer) are considered travel players and are not permitted to play on SAM recreational teams in the fall season. However, during the spring season only, a player possessing a player card who is NOT actively participating on the carded team may play on a SAM team. (For example, a player was carded and played travel in the fall season. That same player decides not to play on the travel team in the spring. The card issued to them during the fall season is valid throughout the spring, but if that player is no longer playing on the travel team, they can play in the SAM Recreation league.)

Teams using carded players not meeting the criteria listed above will forfeit games in which that player participated.

Additionally, carded players will be removed from the roster. Coaches who knowingly allow carded players to participate may face additional sanctions.

Sanctioning – Players

See age-specific rules below.

Sanctioning – Coaches and/or Spectators

Referees are authorized to warn coaches using a yellow card for the first warning and a red card if the warning is not adhered to. Failure to follow the referee’s direction may result in forfeiture of the game and potential disciplinary action from SAM Soccer. If a coach receives a red card they will be ejected from the game and will not be permitted to attend the next scheduled game.

Coaches who receive a red card must immediately leave the field and sit in their car and/or leave the complex.

Spectators are not shown red or yellow cards, however, they may be asked to leave the field by a referee. If a spectator is removed from the game, they must immediately leave the field and sit in their car and/or leave the complex.

Coaches are responsible for their players and parents/spectators.

Referees

Referees are scheduled for every game. If the referee does not arrive at the scheduled start time, the game may be played with volunteer referees agreed to by the coaches. Referee “no shows” must be reported to the Soccer Program Coordinator by the team coaches so appropriate action can be taken.

Games & Practices

Teams cannot play their games or hold a practice unless a “SAM-approved” coach or assistant coach is present. “SAM-approved” coaches/assistant coaches **must** have completed a background screening process within the past two years.

Benches & Spectators

Players/coaches may occupy the provided benches.

All spectators must stand/sit completely off the field and in the taller grass to limit damage to the fields. No coaches or spectators are allowed on the field or behind the goal line during the game with the exception of injuries. Coaches may not go beyond the penalty box lines while on the sidelines. Coaches and Spectators must stay on their team's half of the field until the completion of the game. Coaches cannot cross the half line to coach their team even when the teams have switched sides.

For full-sided games, spectators are to be on opposite side of the field from the players/coaches. For small-sided games, spectators must sit behind the teams.

Throw-Ins

A second throw-in attempt is automatically awarded after an illegal throw-in is attempted. After a 2nd illegal throw-in, the ball is given to the opposing team as a throw-in. The referee will make the determination if the throw-in is legal.

Goal Kicks

For U-9 and younger age groups, goal kicks can be taken at the top of the penalty box. Players from the opposing team will stand 10 yards away to enable the kicking team to put the ball in play.

Noise Makers

Noise makers, including air horns, are not allowed at games.

Weather Cancellations

When a game is cancelled part-way through due to weather, use the following:

- Games cancelled before half-time will be rescheduled at a time to be determined. The game will be replayed in full.
- Games cancelled during or after halftime are considered complete. The score at that time will stand.



Maryland SoccerPlex

Maryland SoccerPlex Rules & Conduction Policy

For Natural Grass Fields:

1. No warming up in the penalty box.
2. No warming up or playing on closed fields.
3. Park only in designated spaces.
4. Deposit all trash in garbage cans provided.
5. No pets allowed.
6. All tobacco products prohibited.
7. No alcohol.

For Synthetic Turf Fields:

1. No spitting on fields.
2. No warming up or playing on closed fields.

3. Water is the only drink permitted on the turf. All other food and drinks, including Gatorade or other sports drinks, are prohibited.
4. Park only in designated spaces.
5. Deposit all trash in garbage cans provided.
6. No gum chewing.
7. All tobacco products prohibited.
8. No alcohol.
9. No pets allowed.
10. No tents with spikes.

The Maryland SoccerPlex & Discovery Sports Center is a state-of-the-art multi-sport athletic facility and we expect all players, coaches and visitors to treat it with respect. This is your home as much as ours. Any person(s) found defacing, destroying or damaging Maryland SoccerPlex & Discovery Sports Center property will be asked to leave immediately. They will be suspended from further play if circumstances warrant, without a refund. The Maryland SoccerPlex, Discovery Sports Center and SAM Soccer also reserves the right to require any player, coach, team, or visitor who engages in violent, abusive, threatening or offensive conduct to leave the premises. They will be suspended from further play if circumstances warrant, without refund. This type of behavior will NOT be tolerated.



Age-Specific Exceptions

Where age divisions are combined, the rules of the older age division will be applied. (For example, a combined U11/12 age division will follow the U-12 rules.)

U-7 & U-8: Play at this level is very instructional. Emphasis is placed on developing basic skills, including: running, balance, positioning, rules, and ball control. Ball control skills include dribbling, passing and shooting with an emphasis on using both feet. The reduced number of players will allow for better instruction.

- The number of players on the field per team is six (6).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is five (5) per team.
- Roster maximum is ten (10) players.
- Games consist of twelve (12) minute quarters with three (3) minute breaks between quarters and a five (5) minute break at half time.
- There are no: slide tackles; off sides; direct kicks. Fouls within the penalty box result in indirect kicks only.
- Substitutions are “on-the-fly” and are not to disrupt the flow of the game (no time outs).
- Ball size #3.
- Field size: Approximately 40yds x 50yds.
- Goal size: Approximately 6 ft x 12 ft.
- Scores and standings **are not** maintained and participation awards are given to all players.

U-9: Play at this level continues to be instructional, and is preparatory for the next level. Comfort using all parts of both feet will be developed. Additional skills of shielding, turning, attacking, and play formation will also be taught. As appropriate, more advanced skills can be introduced.

- The number of players on the field per team is seven (7).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is five (5) per team.
- Roster maximum is twelve (12) players.
- Game consists of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves and a five (5) minute break at half time.
- The offside rule is enforced.
- There are: **no slide tackles** or direct kicks. Fouls within the penalty box result in indirect kicks only.
- Substitutions are “on-the-fly” and are not to disrupt the flow of the game (no time outs).
- Ball size: #4.
- Field size: Approximately 40yds x 50yds.
- Goal size: Approximately 6ft x 12ft.
- Scores and standings **are not** maintained and participation awards are given to all players.

U-10 & U-11: Play at this level continues to be instructional, and is preparatory for the next level. Comfort using all parts of both feet will be developed. Additional skills of shielding, turning, attacking, and play formation will also be taught. As appropriate, more advanced skills can be introduced.

- The number of players on the field per team is eight (8).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is six (6) per team.
- Roster maximum is fourteen (14) players.
- Game consists of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves and a five (5) minute break at half time for U10.
- Game consists of two (2) thirty (30) minute halves and a five (5) minute break at half time for U11.
- The offside rule is enforced.
- There are: **no slide tackles** or direct kicks. Fouls within the penalty box result in indirect kicks only.
- Substitutions are “on-the-fly” and are not to disrupt the flow of the game (no time outs).
- Ball size: #4.
- Field size: Approximately 50yds x 70yds.
- Goal size: Approximately 6ft x 18 ft.
- Scores and standings **are** maintained and awards are given to division champions.
- The HOME team coach/manager (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game.**

U-12: Play at this level is more competitive and is governed by full FIFA rules, with the exception of small-sided rules and **no slide tackling**.

- The number of players on the field per team is eight (8).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is six (6) per team.
- Roster maximum is fourteen (14) players.
- Games consist of two (2) thirty (30) minute halves with a five (5) minute half time.
- Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee:
 - Prior to throw-in in your favor
 - Prior to kick-off
 - Prior to goal kick by either team
 - Prior to a throw-in by the opposing team, *only* if the opposing team is also substituting.
 - On injury- only for the player (s) involved, opposing teams may substitute like number.
 - Substitutes stand at midfield line and wait until acknowledged by the referee.
- Direct kicks and penalty shots are allowed.
- Yellow and red cards will be in effect. Players who receive a yellow card may continue playing. Players receiving two yellow cards in one match or a red card will be ejected from the game and their team must play down one (1) player for the remainder of that match. The player who received two yellow cards or red card must also sit out the next scheduled match. Coaches and referees will notify the league if a red card has been issued.
- Ball size: #4

- Field size: Approximately 50yds x 70yds.
- Goal size: Approximately 6ft x 18 ft.
- Scores and standings **are** maintained and awards are only given to division champions.
- The HOME team coach/manager (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game.**

U-13-17 program:

Play at this level is more competitive and is governed by full FIFA rules, with the exception of **no slide tackling**.

- The number of players on the field per team is eleven (11).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is nine (9).
- Roster maximum is eighteen (18). Roster maximum is twenty two (22) for the High School division.
- For U-13 and U-14 games consist of two (2) thirty five (35) minute halves with a five (5) minute half time.
- For U-15 and older games consist of two (2) forty (40) minute halves with a five (5) minute half time.
- Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee:
 - Prior to throw-in in your favor
 - Prior to kick-off
 - Prior to goal kick by either team
 - Prior to a throw-in by the opposing team, *only* if the opposing team is also substituting.
 - On injury- only for the player (s) involved, opposing teams may substitute like number.
 - Substitutes stand at midfield line and wait until acknowledged by the referee.
- Direct kicks and penalty shots are allowed.
- Yellow and red cards will be in effect. Players who receive a yellow card may continue playing. Players receiving a red card or two subsequent yellow cards will be ejected from the game and their team must play down one (1) player for the remainder of that match. The player who received a red card must also sit out the next scheduled match. Coaches and referees will notify the league if a red card has been issued.
- Ball size: #5
- Field size: Approximately 70 yds x 105 yds
- Goal size: Approximately 8ft x 24 ft
- Scores and standings **are** maintained and awards are given to the first place team.
- The HOME team coach (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game.**