

## North Vegas Youth Soccer League (NVYSL)

### Grades 4-5

#### Rules for 9v9

##### 1. Team Composition

- **Number of Players:** Each team plays with 9 players on the field consisting of 8 outfield players and 1 goalkeeper per team.
- **Minimum Players:** A team must have at least 6 players (including a goalkeeper) to start or continue a match.
- **Roster Size:** Teams typically have a roster of 12-14 players to allow for substitutions and manage player fatigue.
- **Captain:** Each team may (but is not required to) designate a captain to communicate with referees and represent the team during the coin toss.

##### 2. Equipment

- **Ball:** All matches are played with a size 4 soccer ball. Both teams should bring a game ball, and the referee will select one for use.
- **Uniforms:** Teams must wear matching jerseys. Each jersey should have a number on the back. Goalkeepers must wear a jersey of a contrasting color.
- **Shin Guards:** Mandatory for all players and must be worn underneath socks.
- **Footwear:** Players must wear soccer cleats. No sandals, open-toe shoes, metal cleats, toe cleats, or baseball cleats are permitted.
- **Jewelry:** No jewelry of any kind is allowed during games, including earrings (even if taped), watches, necklaces, or bracelets. Medical ID bracelets may be worn if properly secured.
- **Eyewear:** Sports goggles are permitted and encouraged for players who wear glasses. Prescription glasses may be worn as long as they are secure.
- **Casts & Braces:** Soft braces may be worn with referee approval. Players with hard casts may not participate for safety reasons.

##### 3. Field Specifications

- **Field Size:** The field of play will be rectangular, 40-50 yards wide by 70-80 yards long.
- **Markings:** Field includes boundary lines, penalty areas, goal areas, a center circle, corner arcs, and penalty spots.

- **Goals:** Reduced “youth” size goals are used and will be between 6-8 feet tall by between 9-12 feet wide. Nets must be properly attached and safe.
- **Technical Areas:** Coaches and substitutes must along the sidelines and may not step onto the field during play unless permitted by the referee.

#### 4. Game Duration

- **Match Length:** Two 25-Minute halves
- **Halftime:** A 5-minute break between halves, subject to change as needed in the sole discretion of the referee.
- **Clock Management:** The clock runs continuously. The referee may, but is not required to, add time for injuries or stoppages at their discretion.
- **Tied Games:** Regular season matches may end in a tie. No overtime or penalty shootout unless part of a playoff /tournament format.

#### 5. Kick-Off Procedures

- **Start of Match:** The game begins with a coin toss. The winner chooses either possession or which goal to attack. The opposing team gets the other option.
- **Kick-Off:** Ball is placed in the center circle. Opposing players must be at least 8 yards away. Ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves.
- **Restart After Goals:** The conceding team restarts the game with a kick-off.
- **Second Half:** Teams switch sides, and the team that did not kick off in the first half begins the second half.

#### 6. Scoring

- **Goal Definition:** A goal is scored when the entire ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and beneath the crossbar, provided no rules were violated.
- **Own Goals:** If a player accidentally scores on their own team, it counts as a goal for the opposing team.
- **Mercy Rule:** If a team leads by 8 or more goals, the game is officially ended, and that team is declared the winner. Coaches and referees may agree to continue playing for development purposes, but the outcome is final once the 8-goal margin is reached. Teams are encouraged to remain competitive and respectful. Coaches should manage lopsided scores with sportsmanship in mind (e.g., rotate positions, limit scorers).

#### 7. Offside Rule

- **4th/5th Basic Offside:** A player is in an offside position if they are nearer to the opponent’s goal line than the last defender and the ball *at the moment the ball is played to them*, unless they are:

- In their own half of the field;
  - Even with the last defender; or
  - Not actively involved in play.
- **No Offside on Certain Plays:** There is no offside on throw-ins, goal kicks, or corner kicks.

## 8. Fouls and Misconduct

- **Direct Free Kick Fouls:** These include kicking, tripping, jumping at, charging, striking, pushing, or tackling an opponent in a dangerous or unfair manner, or handling the ball deliberately.
- **Indirect Free Kicks:** Awarded for less serious infractions, including:
  - Goalkeeper handling the ball after a teammate intentionally passes it back with the foot;
  - Dangerous play (e.g., high kicks near an opponent's head);
  - Obstruction (shielding without playing the ball).
- **Penalty Kicks:** Awarded for direct free kick fouls committed by the defending team inside their own penalty area. Taken from the penalty mark (6-12 yards away from goal line).
- **Cautions (Yellow Cards):** Issued for unsporting behavior, dissent, persistent infringement, delaying restarts, or not respecting the required distance on restarts.
- **Ejections (Red Cards):** Issued for serious foul play, violent conduct, spitting, using offensive language, or receiving a second yellow card in a match. The player must leave the field and may not be replaced.
- **Slide Tackling:** Prohibited. Slide tackles will be penalized.

## 9. Substitutions

- **Unlimited Substitutions:** Players may be substituted an unlimited number of times during a match, but only during the following situations and with referee permission:
  - After a goal is scored;
  - Throw-ins, Corner Kicks, Goal Kicks — but only if:
    - The team in possession is making a substitution (then both teams may substitute);
    - If the opposing team is *not* substituting and it's their throw-in, corner kick, goal kick, the non-possessing team may *not* substitute;
  - Injuries — any team may substitute with referee approval;
  - At halftime — both teams may substitute freely.

- Procedure: Substitutes must be standing and ready at the halfway line and may only enter the field after receiving a signal from the referee. The player being replaced must fully leave the field before the substitute enters.

## 10. Goalkeeper Regulations

- **Use of Hands:** The goalkeeper may handle the ball only within their defined goal box/area. If they leave the area, they are treated as an outfield player.
- **Back-Pass Rule:** Goalkeepers may not pick up a ball that is deliberately passed to them by a teammate using their feet. Violations result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- **Goal Kicks:** May be taken from anywhere within the goal area. Opposing players must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.

## 11. Player Conduct and Safety

- **Sportsmanship:** Players, coaches, and spectators are expected to show respect at all times to referees, opponents, and teammates.
- **Respect for Officials:** Referee decisions are final. Abuse or dissent may lead to cards, dismissal from the game, or disciplinary review.
- **Injuries:** Play stops for serious injuries. Injured players must leave the field and can re-enter with referee permission once evaluated.
- **Heat Safety:** During hot weather, referees may provide hydration breaks as needed at their discretion.
- **Referee Authority:** The referee has full authority to enforce the rules, manage conduct, and suspend or terminate matches due to unsafe conditions.