

**ST. CLARE SOCCER**  
U-10 GIRLS



## **Soccer 101:**

Information and Rules to review with your child

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## ***Hints for a fun season, with lots of positive memories for your kids and your family!***



1. Make sure that win or lose you love them, as the person in their life that they can always look to for support.
2. Try to be completely honest with yourself about your kids' athletic capability, their competitive attitude, their sportsmanship, and their level of skills.
3. Be helpful, but don't coach your kids on the way to the game or at the breakfast table. Think about how tough it must be on them to be constantly inundated with advice, pep talks, and criticism.
4. Teach your kids to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be out there trying, to be constantly working to improve their skills, to take physical bumps and come back for more. Don't tell them that winning doesn't count because it does, and they know it. Instead help them develop a healthy competitive attitude, a "feel" for competing, for trying hard, for having a good time.
5. Try not to live your life through your kids. You've lost as well as won. You've been frightened and backed off at times. Sure they are an extension of you but they may not feel the same way as you did, want the same things, or have the same attitude.
6. Don't push them in the direction that gives you the most satisfaction. Don't compete with your kids' coaches. A coach may become a hero to your kids for a while, someone who can do no wrong, and you may find that hard to take. Conversely, don't automatically side with your kids against their coaches. Try to help them understand the necessity for discipline, rules, and regulations.
7. Don't compare your kids with other players on their team - at least not within their hearing - don't lie to them about their capabilities as a player. If you are overly protective you will perpetuate the problem.
8. Get to know your kids' coaches. Make sure that you approve of each coach's attitude and ethics. Coaches can be influential, and you should know the values of each coach so that you can decide whether or not you want them passed on to your kids.

9. Remember that children tend to exaggerate. Temper your reaction to stories that they bring home from practice or the game about how they were praised or criticized. Don't criticize them for exaggerating, but don't overact to the stories that they tell you.
10. Teach your kids the meaning of courage. Some of us can climb mountains, but are frightened about getting into a fight. Some of us can fight without fear, but turn to jelly at the sight of a bee. Everyone is frightened about something. Courage isn't the absence of fear. Courage is learning to perform in spite of fear. It's overcoming it.
11. Winning is an important goal. Winning at all costs is stupidity.
12. Remember that the officials are necessary. Don't overreact to their calls. They have rules and guidelines to follow representing authority on the field. Teach your kids to respect authority and to play by the rules.
13. Finally, remember, if the kids aren't having fun, we're missing the whole point of youth sports!

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## ***Gear-Up!***

**The following gear is divided into Parent-provided and League-provided:**

**NOTE:** Please confirm with your soccer coordinator to the League-provided items.  
**Please NO jewelry is allowed to be worn during practices or games, including any type of earrings, necklaces, etc. Please check your child for these items so that the team does not get penalized for breaking the rules.**

### **Parents-provided:**

**Shinguards:** Protective equipment worn by players to aid in prevention of injuries to the shin. This protective equipment comes in all shapes and sizes. It is best for parents to get a pair of shinguards that best fit around the shin area beneath a pair of soccer socks and have an attachment/strap under the bottom of the foot area and an attachment/strap around the child's calf-area of the leg.



**Stockings:** More commonly referred to as "soccer socks". The socks that cover the shinguards.



**Practice Soccer Ball:** What's soccer without a ball? Buy the correct size. Age 8 and under use size 3 or 4; ages 8 through 12 use size 4; ages 13 and up use size 5 (the official international-size soccer ball). Look for the words "FIFA Approved" or "FIFA Inspected" for higher-end balls. Go for the reasonably priced, for example, a 20-dollar stitched ball is sufficient, and is less of a loss if misplaced.



**Practice Jersey:** For the most part, any plain white or one-color t-shirt (fitted, NOT EXTRA-LARGE or loose fitting) can be used by a child when at a soccer practice. White or one-color is specified due to the ability to have the child amongst others to be identified during any scrimmage or practice game. A fitted t-shirt will be less likely to be grabbed or caught on by an opponent.

**League-provided:**

**Game Jersey:** This is a jersey that is provided for OFFICIAL GAMES. It should be cleaned after every use and maintained for entire season until it is returned to the league at the end of season. In the event that a game jersey has been lost or damaged, a child should wear the same color of the game jersey's color to the game and parent should notify the coach immediately. Depending on the League's soccer coordinator the parent may have to financially reimburse the league for any issued clothing that is lost or damaged. So please consult with your soccer coordinator.



## ***Information and Rules Summarized for Parents!***



**No hands, arms or shoulders:** On the field players can't touch the ball with their shoulders, arms or hands (and other players with their elbows or hands) except to protect themselves from injury. An exception is made for the goalkeeper who is allowed to pick up the ball in the penalty box for up to six seconds at a time - unless she receives a deliberate pass by one of her teammates. The ball cannot be kicked in the penalty box if the goalkeeper has a hand on it.

**Kick-off:** After a goal is scored and at the start of each half/quarter (unless the period ended with a penalty) the ball is kicked off from the middle of the field. The defending team starts on their half and must stay outside the center circle area until kickoff. The ball must move forward for a kickoff to be valid and the kicker cannot touch it again until someone else does.

**Throw-in:** If the ball goes completely over the sideline it gets thrown back on the field by a player from the team that wasn't at fault. A line judge (usually a recruited parent) will point a flag in the direction of the defending goal. There is a required technique.

**Goal Kick, Corner Kick:** If the ball goes off the field at an endline there will be a goal kick or a corner kick. If your team puts the ball over the opposition endline without scoring the other team takes a "goal kick" from inside their goal box (usually at a corner of it). Your team is required to stay out of the penalty box until the ball clears the penalty box.

If your team puts the ball over your own endline (and without scoring on yourself) the other team gets a "corner kick" from a near corner of the field with the ball put in the corner arc. Your team is required to stay so many yards away from the ball, depending on the age group of the players.

**Penalty kick:** Causing a serious foul in your own penalty box - like tripping or putting up a hand to block a shot will give the other team a free kick from the penalty kick mark. All the players from both teams (except the goalkeeper on the goal line) are moved out of the penalty box and the penalty arc.

**Free kick:** Causing a foul outside a penalty box stops play and gives the fouled team a free kick from where the foul occurred, except when stopping play would disadvantage the fouled team (sometimes this distinction is not made). Less serious fouls result in an "indirect" kick where the ball has to be touched by another player besides the kicker before a goal can be scored.

**Offsides:** A player without the ball in front of him/her AND past the midfield line AND without two defenders in front of her (goalkeeper counts as one) is at risk for being called offsides.

**Injury:** Players get hurt frequently. A coach will signal the referee to stop play. **Players on the field should kneel down.** Play is resumed with a "drop ball" that becomes live when it hits the ground.

**Substitutions:** In most leagues you can sub on your team's throw-ins, on any goal kick, and during a kick off: a coach will have to yell "sub ref" so the referee can hear recognize and authorize the substitution.

**Coach and Parent Locations:** Coaches and parents must stay on their side of the field within so many yards of the midfield line during a game.

## ***Game Duration/Timing***



**Leave your expectations from other sports behind: soccer timekeeping is different.**

1. **Game structure:** A soccer game consists of two halves that must be of equal length in their prescribed duration, with a required timeout for halftime in between. In adult soccer, the prescribed duration is 45 minutes. Local organizations can prescribe shorter, though still equal-length halves (and therefore, games) for youth and adult recreational games.
  
2. **Center referee as official timekeeper:** The center referee acts as official timekeeper, and has flexible discretion that is perhaps unique in team sports to determine and extend the amount of official time remaining in the game, as will be explored in more detail below.
  
3. **Continuous, nonstop clock:** The official clock starts at 0:00 and runs upward continuously except at halftime, starting in the second half where it left off at the end of the first, stopping again only at the end of the game. The following important rules are outgrowths from the nonstop nature of the clock:
  - a. **No rule exists allowing clock to be stopped:** The rules give no authorization for the referee to ever stop the official clock from running, except for halftime.
  - b. **No timeouts (none!):** Neither players nor coaches have any right to call a timeout, nor is the referee authorized to recognize or call timeout on his or her own initiative.
  - c. **Fouls or ball out of play:** The clock does not stop for any stoppage in active play, whether it be for a player foul or to retrieve and place a ball that has gone out back into play.

4. **Referee's discretion to add time to game:** Instead of stopping the clock, the referee is authorized to add extra time to each half to compensate for time lost through:
- a. Attending to injuries on the field;
  - b. Completing player substitutions;
  - c. Delays in putting the ball back into active play after it goes out, whether through deliberate time-wasting tactics, or accidental causes like having to retrieve the game ball when it goes out and rolls down a slope into dense brush;
  - d. Any other cause for interruption to active play the referee deems sufficient.

The amount, if any, of time to add is at the discretion of the referee, as s/he deems appropriate. The exact language would seem to indicate that it is mandatory for the referee to extend this discretion for appropriate causes, but in practice the referee's decision to not extend, or very restrictively extend time is not truly subject to challenge except maybe in rare instances (perhaps, such as adding no time when a severe injury stops play for 30 minutes). Most referees do not add time for ordinary momentary delays, such as a few efficiently accomplished substitutions or a few stray balls that must be chased, but rather only when one particular delay or the cumulative effect of several delays becomes substantial. Although the **prescribed** length of the halves must be equal (and must be played out to at least this length), each half (and the game) may run longer than the prescribed amount due to this discretionary power to add time.

5. **No one but the ref really knows what time it is:** In practice the only official clock is usually the stopwatch in the referee's hand or a digital watch on their wrist (called "keeping time on the field"), and there is no particular requirement that the referee inform teams how much time remains. Even if a publicly visible scoreboard clock is available, this at best only tracks official time elapsed, and **not** official time remaining, because of the discretionary power of the referee to add time to compensate for time lost through delays.
6. **Game's only over when the ref says it is:** Remarkably, the rules do not require the referee to inform **anyone**, not even the assistant referees, how much, if any time s/he intends to add to the end of the game, and no one but the referee knows when time will run out and s/he will end of the game with the distinctive triple signature of the whistle, tweet-tweet-tweeeeet!

7. **Halftime break is mandatory:** The players have a mandatory right to a halftime break, which neither the referee nor coaches may waive, of not longer than 15 minutes. The preset rules of the particular competition can stipulate a shorter halftime break, which can only be altered with the consent of the referee.
  
8. **Shortening the game:** Provided both teams and the referee mutually agree before the game starts, both halves may be shortened by equal (never uneven) stipulated amounts. This might be done, e.g. if an afternoon game without lights might extend at full length until after dark.
  
9. **Effect of prematurely ending the game:** A game which is terminated prematurely by the referee for any reason, such as a persistent thunderstorm, the field becoming waterlogged by rain, or excessive spectator interference, is considered abandoned and is a nullity unless the preset rules for that particular competition provide that the score at the time of stoppage stands. Otherwise, a game ended prematurely must be replayed in its entirety, regardless of what was the score or the cause for its premature end.
  
10. **Temporarily suspending game:** The referee may temporarily suspend a game instead of terminating it. A game that is temporarily stopped e.g. to try to wait out a passing storm is not necessarily abandoned after any specific amount of time, but rather becomes so by the referee's surrender of the possibility of waiting it out.
  
11. **If the first two halves end in a tie:** Soccer games are allowed to end with a tie score. However, the preset rules for a particular competition may provide that ties be resolved through using either of the following, or even both (a), followed by (b) if the tie still persists:
  - a. A mini-game of two overtime periods of equal prescribed length (usually stipulated much shorter than regular halves) is played in its entirety, and not as sudden death;
  - b. A contest of alternating penalty kicks is held.

c. In some competitions, sudden victory ("golden goal") overtime is played.

**NOTE:** This means of breaking ties has been tried on an experimental basis in FIFA competitions, but is not yet officially sanctioned by the Laws.

**12. If time expires before penalty shot can be taken:** If a referee calls a foul before time expires for which the referee must award a penalty shot (and not merely a free kick) and the time remaining in the (half or) game then expires before the penalty shot can be taken, the (half or) game cannot end until the penalty shot has been taken and completed. In such time-expired penalty kicks, the attacking team only gets the one touch of the penalty kick itself, even if the shot rebounds off the goalkeeper back into the field, so only the kicker and the goalkeeper participate. The (half or) game is over when either the ball goes out of play or its momentum is spent, having either scored a goal or not.

## ***Ball in/out***

**Unlike basketball or American football, the position of the player or the player's feet is irrelevant. Only the position of the ball matters.**

**NOTE:** It is the job of the referee (aided by the assistant referees) to determine when the ball leaves the field.

**Can a player step out of bounds and still legally play a ball on the touch line or goal line, without first coming back in bounds?**

Yes. Only the position of the ball is relevant. A player may leave the field and re-enter it as long as this occurs during the normal course of play. The referee watches the position of the ball, not the player's feet.

**Can a ball go out of bounds in the air and still be in bounds if it curves back in before it hits the ground, or gets deflected by a player who has not touched the ground out-of-bounds (e.g. like basketball)?**

No. If the ball goes out of bounds in the air and curves back in, it was out and play should be halted, most likely by the AR, who is stationed on the touch line (or on the goal line, in the case of corner kicks) to observe exactly this type of situation.

**Is a ball touching the line in or out? What if it no longer touches the line, but the edge of the ball is still vertically over the line even though the rest of it is out?**

In both these cases, the ball is still in. In order to be out, the ball must completely leave the field; if part of the ball is vertically over the line, then the entire ball has not left the 3-dimensional field.

**The ball appears to have gone out of bounds, but the referee hasn't blown the whistle or done anything yet. Is the ball in or out of play?**

The final decision is in the **hands of the referee**. **When in doubt, players should continue** playing and listen for the referee's whistle.

**Sometime after the game has started, while the ball is in play, an obvious foul occurs but the referee hasn't blown the whistle yet. Is the ball dead from the moment of the foul, or only from the moment the referee blows the whistle or otherwise clearly indicates for play to stop?**

If the foul is called, the ball is dead from the time of the foul. (If the foul is not called or the referee uses the advantage clause to allow play to continue, then there is no dead ball.)

**On which restarts does a player have to wait for the referee's signal to put the ball into play?**

Kickoffs (at the beginning of a half or after a goal) and penalty kicks require the referee to signal before the restart. Referees almost always make this signal with their whistle. No other restarts require a referee's signal and players may immediately restart play on their own initiative. However, a referee has the discretion to delay a restart (e.g. to allow substitutions, to caution a player, to enforce the 10 yard restriction of a free kick). In those cases where the referee delays the restart, he/she will usually indicate the restart with a hand signal.

Players should be coached to quickly restart the game when it is to their advantage. A scoring opportunity may be created by an alert player who quickly puts the ball back into play with the appropriate throw-in or free kick. Some referee clinics teach referees to be alert for these possibilities and to allow them to proceed if the situation warrants. **Note:** when a defensive wall is being set up before a free kick, the referee may tap his whistle or point to it: in this case, players must wait for a whistle before executing the free kick.

**The ball hit the frame of the goal and rebounded onto the field of play. My players didn't know what to do -- was the ball still in play?**

The ball most likely did not leave the field of play. (Occasionally a ball will even roll along the crossbar of the goal and then fall back into the field.) Players should realize that the ball is not out in this situation and should be ready to play the ball.

**What if the game is being played on a field that doubles as an American football field, where the goalposts for the football field also serve as the frame of the soccer goal with double horizontal crossbars, the lower one serving as the crossbar for soccer, and the upper one being the crossbar for football, and the ball strikes the upper crossbar?**

A soccer goal should not have two crossbars. If it does, the coach should discuss the effect of the higher crossbar with the referee before the game. The league or field probably has some ground rules, written or unwritten, which say a ball striking the higher crossbar is out! Barring some type of ground rule, the laws of the game would suggest that as long as the ball did not completely leave the field of play, it is still in play. Similarly, any other unusual structure on the field (a tree, an overhanging branch) may lead to some type of local ground rules which should be discussed with the referee before the game begins.

**What happens if the ball hits the referee, and rebounds out of play or into the goal? What if the ball inadvertently hits the assistant referee? Does it make any difference whether the assistant referee is standing on the line or just outside the line?**

The referee, like the corner flag, or a rock in the field, is merely part of the field of play. If the ball strikes the referee, play should continue just as if the ball bounced off a rock. And if the ball bounces into the goal, it is a goal! (**This is one reason referees try to stay out of the goal area if they can!**)

Similarly, if the ball hits the assistant referee, it should still be played (as if it hit a rather unusual blade of grass!) If the ball passed completely out of the field, it is out; if it did not completely leave the field of play, it is still in. The ball's contact with the referee or assistant referee is irrelevant.

**Since players may run outside the touchline to play the ball, how far from the field should players, fans and coaches be?**

Players, coaches and fans should be at least 2 yards from the field in order to allow room for players to play the ball on the touchline and to allow assistant referees to judge whether the ball is in or out of play.

**A ball is heading out of bounds. Just after it crosses the touch line, but before the ball has left the field of play it is (a) picked up by a player on the field, (b) picked up by a teammate who is not one of the players, (c) picked up by the mother of one of the players, (d) hits a lawn chair and bounces into the field, (e) hits the assistant referee and bounces into the field. Should the game be stopped? if so, what's the restart?**

- a. This is "handling" by a player. It is a penal foul and the opposing team should be awarded a direct free kick from the spot where the ball was handled.
- b. This is outside interference while the ball is in play. Play restarts with a drop ball. The referee may caution (give a yellow card to) the team member who interfered with the ball (the caution would be for unsporting conduct).
- c. This is outside interference while the ball is in play. Play restarts with a drop ball. In most leagues the referee is not allowed to caution (give a yellow card to) a fan, but the referee will likely take steps to assure such interference does not re-occur.
- d. Same as 'c' above.
- e. Since the ball did not leave the field of play then play has not stopped! Keep playing!

**A player restarting the game with a throw-in throws the ball down the touchline and it lands out of play. Sometimes the referee lets the player retake the throw-in; other times he awards a throw-in to the other team. Why?**

If, in the opinion of the referee, the ball entered the field (that is, at least some part of the ball crossed over the outside edge of the touch line), then the ball was properly thrown into play and then subsequently curved out of bounds. Thus the ball left the field and was last touched by the thrower and a throw-in is now awarded to the opposite team.

However, if, in the opinion of the referee, the ball did not enter the field, a throw-in did not occur. The ball is returned to the thrower so that he/she may restart the game.

**The Red team is awarded a throw-in. Red player number 8 runs off the field and picks up the ball. Red player 9 runs toward Red 8 and calls, "Let me do the throw." Player 8 lobs the ball underhand to Red 9, while Red 9 is still on the field. Is this legal?**

Most referees would recognize that Red 8 is not attempting a throw-in and would then wait for Red 9 to step off the field and make the throw-in. However, since Red 8 had the ball out of bounds and, by tossing it to player 9, put the ball into the field, it is possible that the referee will consider this an attempted throw-in. If the referee believes Red 8 was attempting a throw in, he might call an illegal throw-in on the Red team or, worse yet, call a foul on Red 9 for handling the ball. For this reason, Red 8 should place the ball on the ground outside the touch line and thus leave it for Red 9 and not risk an inadvertent turnover.

**On a corner kick the ball strikes the near goal post and rebounds into the field of play. However, the assistant referee raises his flag and rules the ball was out of play. Why?**

It is possible that the ball, when kicked from the corner flag, curved over the goal line, completely leaving the field of play, and then curved back into the field where it then hit the goal post. The ball is out of play, not because it struck the goal post, but because it completely left the field after it was kicked. (The restart should be a goal kick.)

## ***Practice, Practice, and Practice...to be Winners!***



**You child’s practice habits and commitments, including showing up for practice early, learning the drills, and paying attention to instruction will result in more playing time in games, recognition for any travel or club team positions, and most importantly our success for the season!**

**The following are the skill areas that we will be practicing throughout the season:**

### **BALL TOUCH AND HANDLING**

- Maintain close control with both feet.
- Be agile, stay on toes.
- Use all parts of feet, inside, outside, laces, sole.
- Move to get behind balls path.
- Keep a soft contact.
- Concentrate on center of ball.
- Keep head up.
- Control ball first, don’t just kick it away.
- Change direction and speed when turning.
- Be a friend with the ball.

### **PASSING**

- Use inside of feet.
- Change body position so it’s comfortable.
- Stay relaxed. Don’t be like a robot.
- Look at ball when passing.
- Pass to other players, not just kick and hope.
- Move afterwards.
- Move away from players to receive ball.
- Turn body to face ball when receiving.
- Stay spread out.

## **SHOOTING**

- Keep toe pointing down.
- Lock ankle.
- Strike with shoelaces.
- Strike through center of ball.
- Swing leg and follow through.
- Keep relaxed except keep foot locked.
- Accuracy before power.
- Keep knee and head over ball.
- Place standing foot alongside ball, not in front or behind.
- Aim for bottom corners of goal.
- Accuracy before power.
- Follow after shooting.
- Use foot closest to the ball. (i.e. left or right foot).

## **DURING GAMES**

- All of the above items.
- Keep moving.
- Encourage movement towards ball.
- Encourage use of entire field.
- Keep positions only loosely restricted.
- Rotate subs and try positions based on skills and practice habits.
- Coach, educate, and support during games.
- Explain all fouls and calls made.
- Play hard, fair, and of course.....let's win for St. Clare Soccer!

