

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

HELENA FAMILY YMCA YOUTH SOCCER



Parent/Coach Handbook

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HELENA FAMILY YMCA
1200 N Last Chance Gulch • (406) 442-9622
***Welcome Parents and Coaches to the
Helena Family YMCA***

YOUTH SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

The Youth Soccer program at the Helena Family YMCA gives children ages 3 through 5th grade the opportunity to learn sports skills in a supervised recreational environment. We believe that participating in sports should be *FUN* and that every player should have an *EQUAL OPPORTUNITY* to play. The emphasis of our program is on the *DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS and SPORTSMANSHIP*. We de-emphasize winning and ensure equal playing time for all players.

CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY

The YMCA has made a national commitment to help young people learn the values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility, all necessary to hold us together as a community. We seek to incorporate these values in all that we do and to partner with families in teaching these essential values to our young people. By teaching these values during the practices of this youth sports program, we hope to give participating children the opportunity to become better teammates both on and off the field.

SEASON FAQ's:

Games: Games take place on Saturdays at Centennial Park between 9am-2pm. There may be some make-up weekday games due to weather.

Practices: Practice day and time is selected during registration. Practices take place at Centennial Park for 60-minutes on weekday evenings.

Equipment: Players bring their own soccer balls, with their name on them. Please wear your YMCA jersey (distributed by the first game), athletic shorts or pants, knee-high socks, and shin guards. Cleats not required. Please no metal cleats.

Game Schedules: A link to access your game schedule will be sent out in the pre-season email, typically 1-2 weeks before the season starts. Game schedules are accessed through YGametime.

- YGametime can always be accessed by going to helenaymca.org. Click "YGametime" from along the top. Then click "Sports and Programs" from along the top. Choose your division from the dropdown. Scroll down to see full schedules.

Snacks: Although not necessary, many kids "live" for the after-game snack! Help out your coach by volunteering to create a snack schedule for parents.

Pictures: Due to COVID and the fact that our photographer uses inside equipment, pictures have been indefinitely cancelled. We truly hope to bring pictures back to YMCA sports as soon as possible.

Weather: It is our policy to cancel games only in extreme weather conditions. If games must be cancelled, the Coaches will be notified and a text blast will be sent out. ***You will only receive notice via text if you OPT IN to receive them. Visit YGametime to sign-up for ALERTS.***

Cancellations, substitutes, and make-up games: Please be mindful that our coaches are all volunteering their time! Sometimes illness or last-minute cancellations are inevitable. Coaches will reach out to their teams to find substitutes if they cannot make a practice or game. Please volunteer if you can!

If a game does end up being cancelled, we will try our best to schedule make-up games during regular practice times throughout the week.

YMCA COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES:

Coach a group of kids in a safe, positive, and inclusive environment. Remember that sports at the Y focus on fundamentals and sportsmanship – not competition! Every player gets equal playing time, regardless of ability.

Contact all the families on your roster when prompted after receiving your finalized practice details and game schedule. Introduce yourself, remind them of practice time, and ask now for any assistants or substitutes to cover you during the season if needed.

Distribute team jerseys, provided by the Y. This may involve swinging by the Y before a practice or game to pick up your team's jerseys.

Inform your team if you will miss a practice or game and ask other parents for substitutes. Please don't cancel practice unless it is an emergency. 99% of the time we've seen that a parent will be happy to cover you for one day.

Designate a team parent to assist with a snack schedule if you like.

Ask for support if needed! Sports Coordinators at the Y are there to help you with scheduling needs, roster concerns, and to provide extra equipment if desired. Players bring their own balls to practice. The Y can also provide scrimmage vests, whistles, stopwatches, and cones BY REQUEST.

Know the rules at each level of play. The YMCA modifies rules to create a positive experience for the kids. As children grow and their skills get better, the rules grow with them. Check out the Coach's Corner on YGametime for a "rules cheat sheet."

Maintain good relationships with your players and their families by being positive, communicative, and promoting the YMCA values in your actions. You are a major role model for your team!

Parent Agreement

As a parent in the Helena Family YMCA's Youth Sports Program...

1. I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
2. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
3. I will not engage in unsportsmanlike or disrespectful conduct with any official, coach, player, volunteer, Y staff member, or other parent.
4. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
5. I will teach my child to treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, gender, or ability.
6. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time. Remember, we don't keep score at the Y!
7. I will respect the officials and their authority during games.
8. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.

Itty-Bitty (Age 3) Soccer Rules

YMCA Youth Sports is unique, emphasizing skill-development, sportsmanship, and teamwork. We de-emphasize competition and instead focus on the fun and learning that sports can provide. The YMCA also promotes equal playing time for all its participants. All players must play an equal amount of playing time in each game.

EQUIPMENT:

- Size 3 Ball – players bring their own balls
- YMCA jersey, athletic shorts or sweats, calf-high socks, shin guards
- Cleats are not required. Please no metal cleats.

GOAL SIZE: 48" (H) X 72" (W)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- Minimum to play: 3
- Maximum: 3
- No goalie

Substitutions are unlimited, but please be mindful of the YMCA's equal play rule.

If a team has less than the minimum number of players, there are 3 options:

- The team forfeits the game
- The opposing team plays short to match
- The opposing team lends players to the short team

REFEREES:

- Coaches act as referees for Itty Bitty games.
- Feel free to assign a co-coach or parent volunteer to help referee.
- Rule cheat sheets will be available on game days with Y staff.
- Coaches also act as timekeepers. Stopwatches are available.

GAME DURATION:

- Four 6-minute quarters. If needed, feel free to switch to 4 or 5-minute quarters depending on player stamina.
- Time will continue to run, with no overtime.
- Each team gets two 1-minute timeouts per game.
- Teams get a 2 minute break in between quarters.

START OF PLAY:

- Kick-off at mid-field starts the game and every quarter. A coin-toss (or rock paper scissors) determines which team kicks off first.
- Kick-offs take place after a goal – by the team that allowed the goal.
- Teams change ends every quarter. Teams switch who kicks-off every quarter.
- Ball will be stationary at the center of the field for kick-offs and must travel forward into the opposing team's side.
- Every player must be in their own half of the field prior to kick-off. Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- Ball is out of bounds when it crosses the goal line or touch line in its entirety, either in the air or on the ground. A player, who is out of bounds, can still play the ball as long as the ball is still in-bounds.
- Ball striking a coach, goalpost, or cone/flag is considered in play as long as it stays in-bounds.

SCORING:

- A goal is scored when the ball crosses wholly over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- If a defending player deflects the ball with their arm and the ball still goes in the goal, a goal is scored.
- Score is not kept during YMCA sports.

OFFSIDE: N/A**FOULS:**

- Jumping at an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Kicking an opponent
- Violent charge / dangerous play
- Striking or spitting at an opponent
- Holding
- Pushing
- Slide tackles
- Handling the ball with hands

FREE KICKS: N/A**PENALTY KICKS: N/A****THROW IN:**

- Awarded if the ball wholly crosses over the sideline, either in the air or on the ground.
- Ball is thrown in from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the team opposite to the team who last touched the ball.
- Thrower should face the field, part of each foot on the ground, either on the sideline or just outside the field.
- Throw the ball with both hands, from behind and over the head.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Two throw-in attempts are allowed. If neither are successful, the opposing team receives the ball from the same throw-in spot.

GOAL KICK: N/A**CORNER KICK: N/A****PASSBACK RULE: N/A**

Pre-K (Ages 4-5) Soccer Rules

YMCA Youth Sports is unique, emphasizing skill-development, sportsmanship, and teamwork. We de-emphasize competition and instead focus on the fun and learning that sports can provide. The YMCA also promotes equal playing time for all its participants. All players must play an equal amount of playing time in each game.

EQUIPMENT:

- Size 3 Ball – players bring their own balls
- YMCA jersey, athletic shorts or sweats, calf-high socks, shin guards
- Cleats are not required. Please no metal cleats.

GOAL SIZE: 48" (H) X 72" (W)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- Minimum to play: 3
- Maximum: 3
- No goalie

Substitutions are unlimited, but please be mindful of the YMCA's equal play rule.

If a team has less than the minimum number of players, there are 3 options:

- The team forfeits the game
- The opposing team plays short to match
- The opposing team lends players to the short team

REFEREES:

- Coaches act as referees for Pre-K games.
- Feel free to assign a co-coach or parent volunteer to help referee.
- Rule cheat sheets will be available on game days with Y staff.
- Coaches also act as timekeepers. Stopwatches are available.

GAME DURATION:

- Four 6-minute quarters. If needed, switch to 5-minute quarters depending on player stamina.
- Time will continue to run, with no overtime.
- Each team gets two 1-minute timeouts per game.
- Teams get a 2 minute break in between quarters.

START OF PLAY:

- Kick-off at mid-field starts the game and every quarter. A coin-toss (or rock paper scissors) determines which team kicks off first.
- Kick-offs take place after a goal – by the team that allowed the goal.
- Teams change ends every quarter. Teams switch who kicks-off every quarter.
- Ball will be stationary at the center of the field for kick-offs and must travel forward into the opposing team's side.
- Every player must be in their own half of the field prior to kick-off. Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- Ball is out of bounds when it crosses the goal line or touch line in its entirety, either in the air or on the ground. A player, who is out of bounds, can still play the ball as long as the ball is still in-bounds.
- Ball striking a coach, goalpost, or cone/flag is considered in play as long as it stays in-bounds.

SCORING:

- A goal is scored when the ball crosses wholly over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- If a defending player deflects the ball with their arm and the ball still goes in the goal, a goal is scored.
- Score is not kept during YMCA sports.

OFFSIDE: N/A**FOULS:**

- Jumping at an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Kicking an opponent
- Violent charge / dangerous play
- Striking or spitting at an opponent
- Holding
- Pushing
- Slide tackles
- Handling the ball with hands

FREE KICKS: N/A**PENALTY KICKS: N/A****THROW IN:**

- Awarded if the ball wholly crosses over the sideline, either in the air or on the ground.
- Ball is thrown in from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the team opposite to the team who last touched the ball.
- Thrower should face the field, part of each foot on the ground, either on the sideline or just outside the field.
- Throw the ball with both hands, from behind and over the head.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Two throw-in attempts are allowed. If neither are successful, the opposing team receives the ball from the same throw-in spot.

GOAL KICK: N/A**CORNER KICK: N/A****PASSBACK RULE: N/A**

Kindergarten (Ages 5-6) Soccer Rules

YMCA Youth Sports is unique, emphasizing skill-development, sportsmanship, and teamwork. We de-emphasize competition and instead focus on the fun and learning that sports can provide. The YMCA also promotes equal playing time for all its participants. All players must play an equal amount of playing time in each game.

EQUIPMENT:

- Size 3 Ball – players bring their own balls
- YMCA jersey, athletic shorts or sweats, calf-high socks, shin guards
- Cleats are not required. Please no metal cleats.

GOAL SIZE: 48" (H) X 74" (W)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- Minimum to play: 3
- Maximum: 5 (including goalie)
- Yes goalie

Substitutions are unlimited, but please be mindful of the YMCA's equal play rule.

If a team has less than the minimum number of players, there are 3 options:

- The team forfeits the game
- The opposing team plays short to match
- The opposing team lends players to the short team

REFEREES:

- Coaches act as referees for Kindergarten games.
- Feel free to assign a co-coach or parent volunteer to help referee.
- Rule cheat sheets will be available on game days with Y staff.
- Coaches also act as timekeepers. Stopwatches are available.

GAME DURATION:

- Four 6-minute quarters.
- Time will continue to run, with no overtime.
- Each team gets two 1-minute timeouts per game.
- Teams get a 2-minute break in between quarters.

START OF PLAY:

- Kick-off at mid-field starts the game and every quarter. A coin-toss (or rock paper scissors) determines which team kicks off first.
- Kick-offs take place after a goal – by the team that allowed the goal.
- Teams change ends every quarter. Teams switch who kicks-off every quarter.
- Ball will be stationary at the center of the field for kick-offs and must travel forward into the opposing team's side.
- Every player must be in their own half of the field prior to kick-off. Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- Ball is out of bounds when it crosses the goal line or touch line in its entirety, either in the air or on the ground. A player, who is out of bounds, can still play the ball as long as the ball is still in-bounds.
- Ball striking a coach, goalpost, or cone/flag is considered in play as long as it stays in-bounds.

SCORING:

- A goal is scored when the ball crosses wholly over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- If a defending player deflects the ball with their arm and the ball still goes in the goal, a goal is scored.
- Score is not kept during YMCA sports.

OFFSIDE: N/A**FOULS:**

- Jumping at an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Kicking an opponent
- Violent charge / dangerous play
- Striking or spitting at an opponent
- Holding
- Pushing
- Slide tackles
- Handling the ball with hands (except for goalkeeper in penalty area)
- Tackling the ball and making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Goalkeeper delays more than 6 seconds putting the ball into play
- Charging the goalkeeper
- Goalkeeper handles the ball again after possession without the ball touching another player

FREE KICKS: N/A**PENALTY KICKS: N/A****THROW IN:**

- Awarded if the ball wholly crosses over the sideline, either in the air or on the ground.
- Ball is thrown in from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the team opposite to the team who last touched the ball.
- Thrower should face the field, part of each foot on the ground, either on the sideline or just outside the field.
- Throw the ball with both hands, from behind and over the head.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Two throw-in attempts are allowed. If neither are successful, the opposing team receives the ball from the same throw-in spot.

GOAL KICK:

- Goal kick is awarded to the defending team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring goal. The ball must have been touched last by a player on the attacking team.
- Goal kick is taken from any point within the goal area. All opposing players must be outside the penalty area (10 yards).
- Ball must travel outside the penalty area before being in play, and cannot be touched by the kicker a second time before being touched by another player.
- A goal can be scored directly from a goal kick.

CORNER KICK:

- Corner kick is awarded to the attacking team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring a goal. The ball must have been touched last by the defending team.
- Corner kick is taken from the quarter across the side of the field nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
- All opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- If the kicker plays the ball again before another player touches it, the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick.
- A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.

PASSBACK RULE:

- Defending team's goalkeeper CAN play the ball with their hands after it has been passed back by a teammate in the Kindergarten division.

1st Grade (Ages 6-7) Soccer Rules

YMCA Youth Sports is unique, emphasizing skill-development, sportsmanship, and teamwork. We de-emphasize competition and instead focus on the fun and learning that sports can provide. The YMCA also promotes equal playing time for all its participants. All players must play an equal amount of playing time in each game.

EQUIPMENT:

- Size 3 Ball – players bring their own balls
- YMCA jersey, athletic shorts or sweats, calf-high socks, shin guards
- Cleats are not required. Please no metal cleats.

GOAL SIZE: 60" (H) X 120" (W)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- Minimum to play: 4
- Maximum: 7 (including goalie)
- Yes goalie

Substitutions are unlimited, but please be mindful of the YMCA's equal play rule.

If a team has less than the minimum number of players, there are 3 options:

- The team forfeits the game
- The opposing team plays short to match
- The opposing team lends players to the short team

REFEREES:

- Coaches act as referees for 1st Grade games.
- Feel free to assign a co-coach or parent volunteer to help referee.
- Rule cheat sheets will be available on game days with Y staff.
- Coaches also act as timekeepers. Stopwatches are available.

GAME DURATION:

- Four 8-minute quarters.
- Time will continue to run, with no overtime.
- Each team gets two 1-minute timeouts per game.
- Teams get a 2-minute break in between quarters.

START OF PLAY:

- Kick-off at mid-field starts the game and every quarter. A coin-toss (or rock paper scissors) determines which team kicks off first.
- Kick-offs take place after a goal – by the team that allowed the goal.
- Teams change ends every quarter. Teams switch who kicks-off every quarter.
- Ball will be stationary at the center of the field for kick-offs and must travel forward into the opposing team's side.
- Every player must be in their own half of the field prior to kick-off. Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- Ball is out of bounds when it crosses the goal line or touch line in its entirety, either in the air or on the ground. A player, who is out of bounds, can still play the ball as long as the ball is still in-bounds.
- Ball striking a coach, goalpost, or cone/flag is considered in play as long as it stays in-bounds.

SCORING:

- A goal is scored when the ball crosses wholly over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- If a defending player deflects the ball with their arm and the ball still goes in the goal, a goal is scored.
- Score is not kept during YMCA sports.

OFFSIDE: N/A**FOULS:**

- Jumping at an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Kicking an opponent
- Violent charge / dangerous play
- Striking or spitting at an opponent
- Holding
- Pushing
- Slide tackles
- Handling the ball with hands (except for goalkeeper in penalty area)
- Tackling the ball and making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Goalkeeper delays more than 6 seconds putting the ball into play
- Charging the goalkeeper
- Goalkeeper handles the ball again after possession without the ball touching another player

FREE KICKS: N/A**PENALTY KICKS: N/A****THROW IN:**

- Awarded if the ball wholly crosses over the sideline, either in the air or on the ground.
- Ball is thrown in from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the team opposite to the team who last touched the ball.
- Thrower should face the field, part of each foot on the ground, either on the sideline or just outside the field.
- Throw the ball with both hands, from behind and over the head.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Two throw-in attempts are allowed. If neither are successful, the opposing team receives the ball from the same throw-in spot.

GOAL KICK:

- Goal kick is awarded to the defending team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring goal. The ball must have been touched last by a player on the attacking team.
- Goal kick is taken from any point within the goal area. All opposing players must be outside the penalty area (10 yards).
- Ball must travel outside the penalty area before being in play, and cannot be touched by the kicker a second time before being touched by another player.
- A goal can be scored directly from a goal kick.

CORNER KICK:

- Corner kick is awarded to the attacking team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring a goal. The ball must have been touched last by the defending team.
- Corner kick is taken from the quarter across the side of the field nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
- All opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- If the kicker plays the ball again before another player touches it, the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick.
- A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.

PASSBACK RULE:

- Defending team's goalkeeper CAN play the ball with their hands after it has been passed back by a teammate in the 1st Grade division.

2nd-3rd Grade (Ages 7-9) Soccer Rules

YMCA Youth Sports is unique, emphasizing skill-development, sportsmanship, and teamwork. We de-emphasize competition and instead focus on the fun and learning that sports can provide. The YMCA also promotes equal playing time for all its participants. All players must play an equal amount of playing time in each game.

EQUIPMENT:

- Size 3 Ball – players bring their own balls
- YMCA jersey, athletic shorts or sweats, calf-high socks, shin guards
- Cleats are not required. Please no metal cleats.

GOAL SIZE: 60" (H) X 120" (W)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- Minimum to play: 5
- Maximum: 9 (including goalie)
- Yes goalie

Substitutions are unlimited, but please be mindful of the YMCA's equal play rule.

If a team has less than the minimum number of players, there are 3 options:

- The team forfeits the game
- The opposing team plays short to match
- The opposing team lends players to the short team

REFEREES:

- When possible, the Y employs high school or college students to referee games in the 2nd/3rd Grade division.
- For many, this is their first time refereeing and as much an opportunity for them as it is for the players. Please be patient and show them support!
- If refs are unavailable, coaches will act as refs (or a volunteer parent).
- Rule cheat sheets will be available on game days with Y staff.

GAME DURATION:

- Four 8-minute quarters.
- Time will continue to run, with no overtime.
- Each team gets two 1-minute timeouts per game.
- Teams get a 2-minute break in between quarters.

START OF PLAY:

- Kick-off at mid-field starts the game and every quarter. A coin-toss (or rock paper scissors) determines which team kicks off first.
- Kick-offs take place after a goal – by the team that allowed the goal.
- Teams change ends every quarter. Teams switch who kicks-off every quarter.
- Ball will be stationary at the center of the field for kick-offs and must travel forward into the opposing team's side.
- Ball cannot be played a second time until touched by another player. If the second-time rule is violated, the opposing team gets an Indirect Kick.

- Every player must be in their own half of the field prior to kick-off. Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- Ball is out of bounds when it crosses the goal line or touch line in its entirety, either in the air or on the ground. A player, who is out of bounds, can still play the ball as long as the ball is still in-bounds.
- Ball striking a coach, goalpost, or cone/flag is considered in play as long as it stays in-bounds.

SCORING:

- A goal is scored when the ball crosses wholly over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- If a defending player deflects the ball with their arm and the ball still goes in the goal, a goal is scored.
- Score is not kept during YMCA sports.

OFFSIDE: N/A

FOULS:

- Jumping at an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Kicking an opponent
- Violent charge / dangerous play
- Striking or spitting at an opponent
- Holding
- Pushing
- Handling the ball with hands (except for goalkeeper in penalty area)
- Tackling the ball and making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Goalkeeper delays more than 6 seconds putting the ball into play
- Charging the goalkeeper
- Goalkeeper handles the ball again after possession without the ball touching another player

FREE KICKS/ INDIRECT KICKS:

- All free kicks are indirect. A goal may not be scored until the ball has been played or touched by a second player of either team.
- No kicks can be taken by the attacking team within the defending team's goal box. Opponents must be 6 yards off the ball.

PENALTY KICKS: N/A

- Use indirect kick as described above.

THROW IN:

- Awarded if the ball wholly crosses over the sideline, either in the air or on the ground.

- Ball is thrown in from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the team opposite to the team who last touched the ball.
- Thrower should face the field, part of each foot on the ground, either on the sideline or just outside the field.
- Throw the ball with both hands, from behind and over the head.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Two throw-in attempts are allowed. If neither are successful, the opposing team receives the ball from the same throw-in spot.

GOAL KICK:

- Goal kick is awarded to the defending team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring goal. The ball must have been touched last by a player on the attacking team.
- Goal kick is taken from any point within the goal area. All opposing players must be outside the penalty area (10 yards).
- Ball must travel outside the penalty area before being in play, and cannot be touched by the kicker a second time before being touched by another player.
- A goal can be scored directly from a goal kick.

CORNER KICK:

- Corner kick is awarded to the attacking team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring a goal. The ball must have been touched last by the defending team.
- Corner kick is taken from the quarter across the side of the field nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
- All opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- If the kicker plays the ball again before another player touches it, the opposing team is awarded an Indirect Free kick.
- A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.

PASSBACK RULE:

- Defending team's goalkeeper cannot play the ball with their hands after it has been passed back by a teammate in the 2nd/3rd Grade division.
- Goalkeeper must use their feet to play the ball.
- Infractions result in an Indirect Free kick from the spot where the goalkeeper picked up the ball.

4th-5th (Ages 9-11) Grade Soccer Rules

YMCA Youth Sports is unique, emphasizing skill-development, sportsmanship, and teamwork. We de-emphasize competition and instead focus on the fun and learning that sports can provide. The YMCA also promotes equal playing time for all its participants. All players must play an equal amount of playing time in each game.

EQUIPMENT:

- Size 4 Ball – players bring their own balls
- YMCA jersey, athletic shorts or sweats, calf-high socks, shin guards
- Cleats are not required. Please no metal cleats.

GOAL SIZE: 96" (H) X 288" (W)

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- Minimum to play: 5
- Maximum: 9 (including goalie)
- Yes goalie

Substitutions are unlimited, but please be mindful of the YMCA's equal play rule.

If a team has less than the minimum number of players, there are 3 options:

- The team forfeits the game
- The opposing team plays short to match
- The opposing team lends players to the short team

REFEREES:

- Montana Officials Association referees are provided for 4th/5th Grade division games.
- Referees are trained professionals employed by the Y, and their calls are final.
- Referees may ask a coach or parent volunteer to call the ball out (flags provided).

GAME DURATION:

- Two 20-minute halves.
- Time will continue to run, with no overtime.
- Each team gets two 1-minute timeouts per game.
- Teams get a 5-minute break between halves.

START OF PLAY:

- Kick-off at mid-field starts the game and every half. A coin-toss (or rock paper scissors) determines which team kicks off first.
- Kick-offs take place after a goal – by the team that allowed the goal.
- Teams change ends every half. Teams switch who kicks-off every half.
- Ball will be stationary at the center of the field for kick-offs and must travel forward into the opposing team's side.
- Ball cannot be played a second time until touched by another player. If the second-time rule is violated, the opposing team gets an Indirect Kick.
- Every player must be in their own half of the field prior to kick-off. Opposing

players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.

- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- Ball is out of bounds when it crosses the goal line or touch line in its entirety, either in the air or on the ground. A player, who is out of bounds, can still play the ball as long as the ball is still in-bounds.
- Ball striking a coach, goalpost, or cone/flag is considered in play as long as it stays in-bounds.

SCORING:

- A goal is scored when the ball crosses wholly over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- If a defending player deflects the ball with their arm and the ball still goes in the goal, a goal is scored.
- Score is not kept during YMCA sports.

OFFSIDE: N/A

DIRECT FREE KICKS:

- Awarded for the following offenses:
 - Jumping at an opponent
 - Tripping an opponent
 - Kicking an opponent
 - Violent charge
 - Striking or spitting an opponent (results in ejection)
 - Holding
 - Pushing
 - Tackling the ball and making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
 - Handling the ball with hands (except for goalkeeper in penalty area)
- A goal can be scored from a direct free kick

INDIRECT KICKS:

- Awarded for the following offenses:
 - Opponent obstruction
 - Dangerous play
 - Goalkeeper handles the ball again after possession without it touching another player
 - Goalkeeper delays more than 6 seconds in putting the ball into play
 - Players enter field of play without referees consent
 - Offside
 - A player plays the ball a second time after kick-off
 - Charging the ball
 - Charging the goalkeeper
 - Slide tackles
- A goal cannot be scored from an indirect free kick before the ball touches another player.

CAUTIONABLE OFFENSES:

- A player is cautioned and shown a yellow card for any of the following offenses:
 - Unsporting behavior
 - Showing dissent by words or actions
 - Persistently infringing game rules
 - Delaying the restart of play
 - Failing to keep the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick or throw-in
 - Entering the field of play without the referee/coach's permission
 - Deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee/coach's permission

SENDING-OFF OFFENSES:

- A player is sent-off and shown the red card for any of the following offenses:
 - Serious foul play
 - Violent conduct
 - Spitting at an opponent or other person
 - Denying the opposing team a goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball with hands
 - Denying the opposing team a goal-scoring opportunity by using an offense punishable by a free kick
 - Offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures
 - Receiving a second caution within the same match

FREE KICKS:

- Both types of free kicks can be kicked in any direction from the point of the offense (ball must clear the penalty area prior to being played).
- Ball must be stationary on the ground, be kicked, and move before being in play
- Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball when being put into play
- If the offense occurred less than 10 yards from the opponent's goal line, opposing players can stand on their own goal line between goalposts.

PENALTY KICKS:

- Awarded if the defending team commits one of the 9 direct free kick fouls within its own penalty area
- Penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark, centered 12 yards in front of goal.
- All players (except kicker and goalkeeper) must be outside the penalty area, at least 10 yards from the penalty mark.
- Goalkeeper must stand with both feet touching goal line, and cannot move until the ball is kicked.
- Ball must be kicked forward and follow the rules for a kick-off.

THROW IN:

- Awarded if the ball wholly crosses over the sideline, either in the air or on the ground.
- Ball is thrown in from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the

team opposite to the team who last touched the ball.

- Thrower should face the field, part of each foot on the ground, either on the sideline or just outside the field.
- Throw the ball with both hands, from behind and over the head.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Two throw-in attempts are allowed. If neither are successful, the opposing team receives the ball from the same throw-in spot.

GOAL KICK:

- Goal kick is awarded to the defending team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring goal. The ball must have been touched last by a player on the attacking team.
- Goal kick is taken from any point within the goal area. All opposing players must be outside the penalty area (10 yards).
- Ball must travel outside the penalty area before being in play, and cannot be touched by the kicker a second time before being touched by another player.
- A goal can be scored directly from a goal kick.

CORNER KICK:

- Corner kick is awarded to the attacking team if the ball passes completely over the defending team's goal line without actually scoring a goal. The ball must have been touched last by the defending team.
- Corner kick is taken from the quarter across the side of the field nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
- All opposing players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- If the kicker plays the ball again before another player touches it, the opposing team is awarded an Indirect Free kick.
- A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.

PASSBACK RULE:

- Defending team's goalkeeper cannot play the ball with their hands after it has been passed back by a teammate in the 4th/5th Grade division.
- Goalkeeper must use their feet to play the ball.
- Infractions result in an Indirect Free kick from the spot where the goalkeeper picked up the ball.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE COACHING

Remember, children develop and learn at their own individual pace. The developmental information below is a guide only. Use your judgment when it comes to getting through to your players. Every team will have children that overlap into both developmental levels.

Itty-Bitty - Kindergarten Level

- Rules are not as important to this age group. Players may forget the rules from week to week. Think of the games as a skills demonstration.
- Remind them which direction they are supposed to go. Players may respond well to a parent or coach running alongside them or placing them in a certain spot.
- The first two weeks of play are usually chaotic. This is fine! Focus on skills like running, kicking, understanding which goal they are aiming towards, and learning how to play with other kids while listening to their coach.

First – Third Grade Levels

- At this age they love rules. They like to know what is going on and what they are supposed to be doing.
- Explain some of the rules each week without overwhelming them. It's alright if kids don't know every rule of the game until the end of the season.
- Players should start understanding how to make their own choices within the game. Think of yourself as a facilitator, rather than a controller of each child's move.
- Remember to build team pride as the players form positive relationships with each other.

Fourth and Fifth Grade Levels

- Emphasize the rules and fundamentals of the game.
- Educate the players about penalties and how their actions affect others.
- Give tips on strategy while allowing the players to make their own choices.
- Guide the players to develop a team playing strategy and sense of teamwork.

All Grade Levels

- Make sure all team members are kept active as much as possible. Remember the Y's equal play rule – regardless of a player's ability.
- Avoid long lines with only one player going at a time during practices.
- Use assistant coaches or parents whenever possible to split up the team, allowing you to have more kids active at one time.

Potential Weekly Schedule for Practice

WARM-UP (5 MINUTES)

- Explain the importance of warming up our bodies to prevent injury and get ready to play.
- Form your team in a circle or line and introduce stretching and conditioning exercises. As the season progresses, have players volunteer to lead these exercises.

SKILL FOCUS (25 Minutes)

- Explain the importance of focusing on skill development and how that will help them in the games.
- Focus each week on a different fundamental skill of soccer: dribbling, passing, shooting, ballhandling, and team play.
- For the older divisions, start to introduce foundational rules, fouls, and penalties.
- Review previously taught skills each week.

TEAM TALK - VALUES (10 Minutes)

- Sit your team down in a circle and use this time as a physical break while introducing one of the core sportsmanship values of soccer at the Y.
- Players can volunteer to come up with examples of each value (such as a time they showed respect or honesty).
- Review the previously taught value from the week before. Discuss where you saw players using that value during Saturday's game.
- Remember that each player brings something unique. It should be the goal to verbally praise and reward each team member for something positive they showed during the last game or practice.

SCRIMMAGE (20 Minutes)

- Use the end of each practice for a scrimmage, concentrating on skills they've been working on during the practice.
- For older divisions, basic strategy or formations can be introduced.
- For younger divisions, feel free to use co-coaches or volunteer parents to help run alongside the players and help them get into place.
- The YMCA has scrimmage vests available on site by request. Please ask a Sports Coordinator to borrow vests, whistles, stopwatches, cones, or flags!

STRETCHING EXERCISES

Arm circles: Rotate arms forward and backward, in both big and small circles.

Jumping jacks: Self explanatory 😊

Trunk twister: Twist side-to-side from the abdomen, keeping the hips stationary.

Hip rotations: Standing with feet hip-width apart, hands on hips, circle the hips in a complete rotation (front, side, back, side). Do both clockwise and counter-clockwise.

Bent-knee sit-ups: Lying on back on the ground, bend knees to 90 degrees in the air. Hands behind head, sit up to touch the opposite knee with each elbow.

Push-ups: Can be done from toes or knees depending on player comfort and ability.

Windmill: With arms stretched out to the side, feet shoulder-width apart, bend over at the waist to touch the opposite foot before coming back to standing.

Superperson: Lying on stomach, arms extended overhead, raise one leg, lower, switch, repeat.

Alternate knee hug: Lie on the back, lift knee and hug it to chest. Switch leg.

Lunge stretch: Feet hip width apart, step one foot back about one leg-length from the front foot, bend both knees, then come back to standing.

Ankle and knee twists: Place the toe of one foot on the ground and rotate the ankle clockwise and counter-clockwise. Switch. Then stand with feet and knees together, hands on hips, bend knees to rotate side, front, side, then back to standing straight.

Quad stretch: Standing, lift one bent leg and reach behind the grab the ankle. Pull the ankle as close to the body as possible, hold for a stretch.

Calf raises: Standing with feet hip-width apart, slowly raise up onto toes, then back down.

AFTER STRETCHING: Consider 1-2 conditioning exercises (sprints, team jogs, or running drills).

SKILLS AND DRILLS

These drills and games are intended to develop the basic skills of soccer. The drills are arranged in order of difficulty with the easiest at the beginning.

Use individual and partner drills frequently. These give each player more of an opportunity to practice and handle the ball than they would in group drills. Group drills may leave players standing around and lead to a loss of focus.

Remember, drills don't have winners or losers! Try and provide one praise and one small correction (if needed) for each player. It's not necessary to rank players by who did best and worst.

Introduce the READY POSITION for the start of drills. A good ready position means players are alert, focused, and ready to move in any direction. Players may respond well to a special code-word or call-and-response chant that means "get into ready position!"

SHARKS AND MINNOWS

Instructions:

The players with balls (the minnows) attempt to protect their ball from the two "Sharks". The Sharks attempt to gain possession and knock the minnows' ball out of the grid. The last 2 minnows remaining become the sharks in the next round. If time allows, "out" minnows can run around the field once then return to the game for one "second life."

Variations:

Players only use left foot to dribble. Players use outside of feet to dribble.

Coaching Points:

Keep the dribblers under control and not panicked once the sharks get near them. Inform players to keep the ball close within playing distance.

SIMON SAYS

Give "simon says" commands while players dribble the ball within a defined area. Examples of commands could be: change direction, stop the ball, kick the ball as far away as you can, switch feet, put your belly on the ball, clap between your legs, skip away from your ball, etc. Players who don't follow "simon says" can receive a "gotcha!" or do a simple exercise (3 jumping jacks) before the next command.

Coaching Points:

Focus on keeping the ball close and under control. Focus on listening skills.

OUCH!

Instructions:

The coach jogs around in the grid and players try to kick their balls and hit the coach's feet. The players get a point each time they hit the coach. Focus on how this develops good aim for passing during a game. If needed, stop for a couple seconds to give players a chance to aim and kick.

DOWN AND BACK

Instructions:

On the coach's command, instruct the players to dribble to the other side of the field and back to the starting position. Restrict players to touches with only a certain foot or part of the foot. Players should come to a full stop and sharp turn at the other end of the field.

Variations:

To increase difficulty, split your team in two and have them start at opposite ends of the field, dribbling towards each other. This increases field-awareness and navigating other players while dribbling. Focus on avoiding collisions and control of the ball.

RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

Instructions:

Create a starting line for the players, with the coach standing 15-20 yards away. With your back to the players, yell GREEN LIGHT, signaling players to dribble forward. Yell RED LIGHT, wait a moment, then turn to face the players. Anyone who is not stopped/frozen must go back 5 big steps.

UNDER PRESSURE

Instructions:

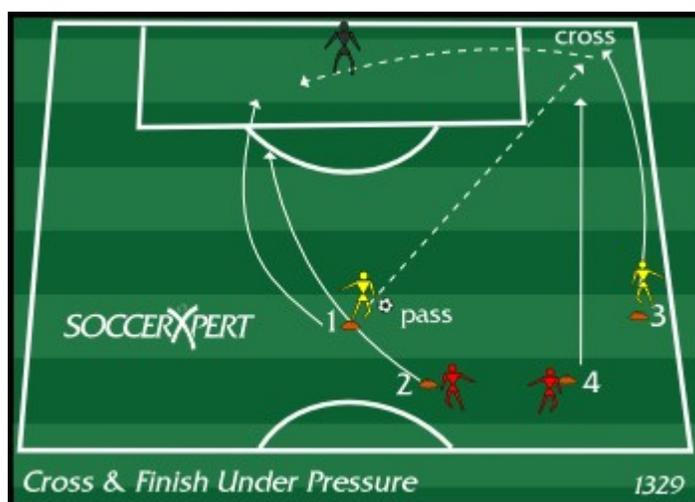
Follow the diagram below. Place a supply of balls at Position 1. Do with or without a goalie. Player 1 passes the ball into the corner of the field for Player 3 to run towards.

As Player 3 starts running, Player 4 chases to put pressure on Player 3 and deny them reaching the ball.

Player 2 comes forward to defend Player 1.

Player 3 gains possession of the ball and passes it back to Player 1 ("the cross"). Player 1 attempts to receive the pass and score a goal while Player 2 defends.

Rotate players so everyone gets a chance on offense and defense.



4 v 3**Instructions:**

Follow the diagram below. Assign 3 defenders and 4 attackers (utilize scrimmage vests). Use a goalie for this drill.

Instruct the players to use their numerical advantage and score a goal.

Attackers should move the ball, look for the open player, and find holes in the defense.

Defenders should attempt to break-down the attack from a one-down situation. Defensive players should complete a pass to the coach to end the attack.

If scoring is too frequent, increase the number of defenders. If scoring is too infrequent, increase the number of attackers.



Weekly Team Talks

Team Talk Week 1: Introductions

Spend some time getting to know each other. Make sure that each child has a chance to talk. The coach's role is to ask questions and let each player share an answer. Cover topics like names, favorite sports, hobbies, etc.

This is a good time to introduce some basic terms (players can volunteer to provide or demonstrate definitions): ready position, passing, dribbling, shooting, offense, defense

Team Talk Week 2: What makes a good athlete?

Introduce Players to the 4 YMCA Character Values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility. Explain how a good athlete isn't just a person who is fast or good at the game, but also a person who shows these values on and off the field. Each value will be explored more in depth in the following weeks.

If time allows, make sure players remember each other's names. A team chant or cheer could be developed to create team pride and bonding among the players.

Team Talk Week 3: Caring

Tell the players that one way of showing that you care is by doing kind things for people. Provide an example by using something you saw a player do on the field (helping another player who fell, cheering for teammates, handshakes with the opposing team, etc).

Ask the players to think of how they could show caring and kindness to members of their family (helping siblings, cleaning their room, washing dishes, etc.) Encourage each player to do one kind thing for a member of their family over the next week.

Team Talk Week 4: Honesty

Ask the players what caring things they did for their families last week as a follow up on last week's discussion.

Explain what honesty means in sports. What does it mean to play fairly? What does cheating mean? Why is that important in sports? Explore how honesty makes the game more fun for both teams.

Team Talk Week 5: Respect

Discuss the idea of cooperation/teamwork versus competition. Point out that the other team makes the game possible. Remember, we don't keep score in YMCA soccer. How does this make respect even more important?

Ask the players to brainstorm ways to show respect to the other team (making positive comments to other players, shaking hands at the end of the game, etc). Explain how you will cheer for the other team in this Saturday's game. Create a cheer your team can do to show support for the other team during the game.

Team Talk Week 6: Responsibility

In YMCA sports, every player gets equal playing time. This means that players are responsible for passing the ball, supporting teammates, and helping their teammates learn during practices.

One of the biggest responsibilities of a soccer player is sportsmanship. How can players show good responsibility during the game? When they win? When they've lost? What does it mean for a player to show good responsibility by listening to their coach?

If time allows, discuss how each player can have a specific responsibility during their final game of the season. Examples include: leading cheers, handing players water, leading stretches, taking care of the game ball, leading the handshake after the game, passing out snacks.