



## Academy/Club LEAGUE RULES

The SPOT WTX League game play is governed by FIFA Laws of the game, as modified by U.S. Soccer Federation for youth play (except as noted below)

Games will be played by the following format for their respective age divisions:

Age	Birth Year	Format	Games	Field Size	Ball Size	Game Duration	Max. Players
U6	2019	5v5	8	20 x 40	3	20 Min. Halves	NA
U7	2018	5V5	8	20 x 40	3	20 Min. Halves	NA
U8 Dev*	2017	7v7	8	40 x 55	4	25 Min. Halves	NA
U9	2016	7v7	8	40 x 55	4	25 Min. Halves	NA
U10 Dev*	2015	9v9	8	50 x 80	4	30 Min. Halves	NA
U11	2014	9v9	8	50 x 80	4	30 min. Halves	NA
U12	2013	9v9	8	50 x 80	4	30 min. Halves	NA
U13	2012	11v11	8	75 x 115	5	35 min. Halves	NA
U14	2011	11v11	8	75 x 115	5	35 min. Halves	NA
U15	2010	11v11	8	75 x 115	5	35 min Halves	N/A

All games will be split with a 5-minute half time break.

\* The Development (“Dev”) Brackets are designed to create the challenge of advanced play for teams, by playing up in game format. In the Development Brackets, you may NOT include players that are older than your team’s current age group. (for example: a U8 calendar year age team may NOT bring in U9 calendar year players)

### 1. Team Eligibility and Guest Players

- The SPOT WTX League is sanctioned through US Club Soccer, therefore, all players must have a US Club Player Card.
- NTSSA Player forms/rosters are NOT VALID – US Club Soccer ONLY
- At every game, teams must have proof (US Club Player ID Card OR Electronic Copies of Player Cards) that all players are registered with US Club Soccer.
- Teams that play ineligible or unregistered players will be forced to forfeit any matches in which the ineligible player(s) played.
- Players may “Play Up” to an older age group but may NOT “Play Down” into a younger age group.
- There will be **NO guest players** – Every player must be registered to play for “The SPOT WTX” League
- **An unregistered player may be added to a The SPOT WTX registered team’s roster for the Fall it will be 10/7/24, for the spring it will be 3/31/25 or approval by the league director.**
- The SPOT WTX league registered player may not register for more than one (1) The SPOT WTX league team/club through the duration of any one season.
- Girls’ teams may play in a Boys division, but Boys teams may not play in a Girls division.

### 2. Division Placement. Each team is strongly encouraged to play in its proper skill division in the soccer year.



3. A team must have the minimum number of players for their age group (see chart below) ready to play to start a game and that number of eligible players to continue a game.

Format	Min. to Start	Min. to Continue
5v5	4	4
7v7	5	5
9v9	6	6
11v11	8	8

If at the scheduled game, a team does not have the minimum number of players, a 5-minute grace period will be allowed. At any time during this 5-minute grace period, if the required number of players arrive, the game will begin immediately with the available players who are present. If the team does not have the required number of players available to play at the end of the 5-minute grace period, the team will be considered to have forfeited the game with a score of 5-0 recorded for the team present.

\*\*If the field is not available until after the scheduled start time for a game, the grace period will commence at the scheduled game time and will run for five minutes or until the field is available.

4. **Player Pass.**

Players, registered with The SPOT WTX league, will be allowed to “Player Pass” to another team if the following conditions are met:

- a. The Player is a registered player with The SPOT League WTX, for the current league season.
- b. The Player is registered with the club or association in which they are to Player Pass
- c. The Player can ONLY play up in age and cannot player pass onto another team within their same registered Age Group.

For Example:

- i. A player whose primary team is registered in the U10 age group, WILL be allowed to Player Pass onto a U11, or older, team.
- ii. A player whose primary team is registered in the U11 age group, WILL NOT be allowed to Player pass onto another team within the U11 age group.
- iii. A player whose primary team is registered in the U10 age group, SILVER division, WILL be allowed to player pass onto a U10 team, registered in the GOLD division.

5. No Player Pass will be allowed on the dates of Finals or in the event of a scheduled tie breaking game.

Players utilizing the “Player Pass” option will be allowed a maximum of 4 games on any given weekend.

6. Willful Forfeiting of Game(s). Teams who willfully forfeit a game, within 7 days of the scheduled match, will be subject to be **TOTAL amount of the referee fees for that game** and must pay the fine before being allowed to resume playing in The SPOT WTX League.

7. **Standing Points for Season Play.** Each team will be awarded standing points as follows:

- a. WIN – Three (3) Points
- b. LOSS – Zero (0) Points
- c. TIE (PK WINNER) - Two (2) Points
- d. TIE (PK LOSER) – One (1) Point

These points will be used to determine League standings for each season.



League Games **can NOT end in a tie**. The SPOT WTX will utilize the “No Mercy” rule in soccer.

Should the Final whistle blow with the current result, being a tie between the two teams, the game will move directly into a penalty shoot-out. **(No OVERTIME/ADDED TIME will be granted)**

Coaches will not be allowed to substitute players on the field at this time and will select three currently fielded players to take penalty kicks, from a penalty marker.

Should the result remain in a tie after the initial (3) penalty kicks, (5 penalty kicks for the finals) “Sudden Death” is implemented, giving additional rounds of one kick each until one team scores and the other misses.

\*ONLY after every fielded player, included the goalie, has been given a chance to take a penalty, will a player be allowed to take an additional penalty kick.

**8. End of season Tie Breakers/Placement.** If two (2) or more teams are tied in the number of points, the tie will break as follows:

- i. Head-to-head (If 3 teams are tied in points it voids rule)
- ii. Overall, Team goal differential
- iii. Total goals scored
- iv. Most shutouts
- v. Head-to head- First game (for the remaining tie breaker if you go to tie breaker V.)
- vi. Flip of a coin

End of Season Semi Finals will be assigned as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place vs 4<sup>th</sup> Place
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place vs 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

The two winners of the Semi-Finals will play each other in the Final. No game will be played to determine 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

**9. NOTE:** In the event a league game or games have been forfeited, the score of any forfeited game will be recorded as 5-0.

**10. 6 game Guarantee**

**ONLY in the events of cancellations due to inclement weather, brackets not finishing a full 8 games will utilize the results from the first six completed games within the bracket.**

**11. Player Jerseys/Numbers**

- Each team must have numbered jerseys for all players, no two players may have the same number.
- Goalkeepers are not required to have a number on their jersey. Goalkeeper jersey must be of a different color than field players on both teams.
- Jerseys must be on the same primary color and should be of identical style. If the referee orders a jersey change due to color confusion, players/teams must comply.
- Alternate jerseys or numbered t-shirts must be available with a unique number for each player
- Pinnies (mesh scrimmage vests) may be used over the jersey to resolve color conflicts as long as the numbers show through the pinnies, to the referee’s satisfaction.
- Violators will be removed from the field by the referee and not allowed back on the field of play until the player equipment issue has been corrected.
- Home Team is team listed first (left) on the schedule. Home Team will wear white or lighter colored jerseys. Away team will wear dark colored jerseys. **AWAY TEAMS ARE NOT TO WEAR WHITE/LIGHT COLOR JERSEYS.** If both teams show up to game wearing white jerseys, the Away team will resolve any jersey color conflicts.



**\*The League Director will reserve the right to allow any team a leniency period in which to have uniform violations corrected\***

## **12. Equipment and Uniforms**

- Players cannot wear anything that is dangerous to themselves, or the other players and no jewelry is allowed. Proper shin guards are required for all players. Braces and other medically required support apparatuses must have no dangerous metal or hard plastic exposed, unless covered with a soft protective covering. The referee shall make the final decision on whether, the player can play.
- Players must wear shin guards that are completely covered by socks.
- Cleats with metal studs or a toe cleat are not allowed. Referees may require players to change improper/unsafe footwear.
- Dress code. The SPOT WTX League prohibits pictures, emblems, or writings on materials or clothing that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, immodest, or promote or refer to drugs, or any illicit substance.
- Dress Code Violations. Any rostered individual failing to comply with the Dress Code may be removed from the game and/or soccer complex until such time as the individual complies.

**13. 5v5-7v7-9v9 Home coach, team bench and spectators will sit on the opposite side of the field from Away coach, team bench, and spectators. So home team will have a full side of the field and the away team will have the other full side of the field.**

**11v11 Coaches & Teams benches will both set up on same predesignated side of the field. All spectators will sit on the opposite side of the field facing your team and coach.**

**14.** Both teams will present a match ball to the referee for him/her to choose from for the official match ball. The referee may decide to use both, one as a back-up.

**15. Substitutions.** There will be free substitutions, with the referee's consent at the following times:

- i. A player receiving a yellow card (the player carded ONLY)
- ii. Prior to a throw-in for the team in possession (the opposing team may substitute when the team in possession subs)
- iii. Prior to a goal kick
- iv. After a goal, by either team
- v. After an injury, by either team, WHEN THE REFEREE STOPS THE PLAY.
- vi. At half-time by either team
- vii. At the referee's discretion

**16.** An official send-off occurs when the referee ejects the player, coach, or spectator from the remainder of the game AND may be require a misconduct report. Any send-offs should be reported to the League immediately following the game. Any player or coach sent-off shall serve the suspension in the subsequent match. (Even if it is a play off game.) Egregious actions warranting more penalties will be decided exclusively by the League Director, whose decision WILL BE FINAL. The League Director has the right to adjust match suspensions.

Any Player sent off must immediately leave the complex. If their parent is not in attendance, they may, with the League Director's permission, sit on their team's sideline, AWAY from the team bench. Any coaches or spectators sent-off by the referee MUST leave the complex immediately.



***Coaches and managers are responsible for the players, parents, and spectators' behavior. A "ZERO TOLERANCE" POLICY FOR SIDELINE MISCONDUCT will be enforced for The Spot Academy League games. This includes inappropriate language, racial slurs, or verbal abuse towards referees, players, and game officials on and off the playing field. Anyone found to be in violation of the ZERO TOLERANCE policy will be removed from the complex and not allowed to re-enter.***

**17. ALL REFEREE DECISIONS ARE FINAL**

- 18.** Once game temperatures exceed 90 degrees, the league may institute 2-minute water breaks (mandatory or referee's discretion). The water breaks would occur in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> halves to play, and the official time will NOT stop. *\*\*\*In the event of establishing water breaks, coaches will be made aware prior to the start of the game \*\*\**
- 19.** All teams have the responsibility to check the schedule for the latest information, regarding their games
- 20.** Compliance with all Complex Rules. Every rostered individual and spectator participating in the league is required to adhere to all playing complex rules.
- 21.** Non-Acceptance: The SPOT League reserves the right HOST (Accept) or NOT HOST (Not Accept) any team, club, coach, or parent as a customer for any reason deemed necessary.



## **U11 and Below Guidelines**

22. Per USCS Guidelines: Players in U-11 programs and younger shall not engage in heading, either in practices or games. In adherence to this requirement, referees have been instructed by U.S. Soccer of the following rule addition: When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line, at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

## **5v5 & 7v7 Standards of Play**

23. If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks (drop the ball on the ground and kick the ball as it bounces back up) the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

24. **Slide Tackling.** (4v4 and 5v5 Formats)

NO slide tackling will be allowed.

A Player will be allowed to slide as an attempt to score or keep a ball in play but may not slide tackle or challenge an opposing player who holds possession or advantage of the ball. Referees may, but are not required to, enforce a 2-minute sit down for players who violate the No Slide Tackle Rule.

25. **Build out Line.** (Per the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives)

The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting. When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play. The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts or drops kicks are not allowed). After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal. Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.

The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line. Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line

To support the intent of the development rule, coaches and referees should be mindful of any intentional delays being caused by opponents not retreating in a timely manner or encroaching over the build out line prior to the ball being put into play. Coaches are responsible for addressing these types of issues with their players. Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 6-second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line.

