**Rules Unique to Upward Soccer**

**Upward Soccer Philosophy**

The special rules for Upward Soccer exist to provide the best sports experience for every child.

The rules for Upward Soccer take precedence over all Federation International Football Association (FIFA) laws. Where the rules unique to Upward Soccer stop, the FIFA Laws of the Game begin. The spirit in which the game is played is equal to the written laws that govern the game. Preserving the integrity of the sport is important, but whenever questions about the interpretation of a foul occur, always refer back to the rules for Upward Soccer.

Keep in mind that everyone, novice or experienced, will make mistakes. However, strive to keep mistakes to an acceptable minimum by learning the rules for Upward Soccer and the FIFA Laws of the Game. A copy of the FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at [www.FIFA.com](http://www.fifa.com/).

**Game Format**

* Referees or coaches lead both teams in prayer at midfield before the game. This is a time to keep things in perspective and set the tone before the game.
* Referees or coaches will call and explain all violations.  This teaches players the game of soccer and to play within the rule structure.
* The coaches should determine which team will start the game. The other team will start the second half.  This creates an environment of coaches working together, not against each other.
* Games consist of two 18 minute halves, one minute for substitutions, and a four minute halftime.  This keeps games under an hour, which honors family schedules.
* The game clock is maintained by the Referees or coaches and will only stop every 6 minutes for the predetermined substitutions.  This keeps games on schedule and honors the participants' time.
* Teams will switch goals at halftime (except in the K5 division).  The reason is to balance any advantage that may occur because of the playing field.
* Scores are not kept in K5 divisions.  Doing this encourages the enjoyment of the game and focus on fundamentals, not the score.
* No division standings are maintained in any division.  Standings add unnecessary pressure and intensity for players.
* Coaches are allowed to walk the sidelines to support players. Coaches are encouraged to be on the field with K5 players to help coach during games.  The focus is on instructing the player; we want coaches to encourage and teach players at all times.
* All coaches will adhere to the substitution rules.  This ensures equal playing time for players.
* No yellow cards or red cards are used in Upward Soccer.  This is because the focus is on instructing the player and we don't want anyone excluded from play.
* There is no extended time in Upward Soccer.  This keeps games on schedule and honors the participants' time.

**Number of Players**

**Team Size:** Ten is the maximum number of players per team.

**Team Format:** 5v5 (6v6 for 4+ and older)

**Additional Players:** One additional player may be added to the field of play by a team that is four goals behind. The additional player may remain on the field until the score differential is two goals.

**Game Duration**

**Game Clock:** The game clock will be maintained by the referee or coach

**Periods of Play:** The game will consist of two 18 minute halves with each have half being divided into three 6 minute periods for 2nd – 6th grades. K5/1st will play two 18 minute halves being divided in six 4 minute periods.

**Half-Time:** Half-Time will be a 4 minute interval between the two 18-minute halves.

**Rules for Upward Soccer**

* A kick-off begins each half and after a goal has been scored. Opposing players must remain outside the center circle or 4 yards away until the ball has been put in play. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 8.
* Shooting Arc: There is no ball contact allowed within the shooting arc. If the ball comes to a stop within the arc, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team regardless of who touched the ball last. Any part of the ball or player’s body on the line is considered in the shooting arc. Once the ball has broken the plane of the shooting arc and a defensive player touches the ball, a corner kick is awarded. If the attacking player touches the ball inside the arc, a goal kick is awarded. The plane of the shooting arc extends upward.
* Fouls will result in either an indirect or direct kick. Opposing players must be 5 yards away from the ball.
* *Indirect Kick:* A player other than the kicker must touch the ball before a goal can be scored. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 13.
* *Direct Kick:* The kicker may score directly without another player touching the ball. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 13.
* Indirect kicks are awarded to the opposing team if one of these fouls is committed (For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 12):
* Dangerous Play
* Obstructing an opponent
* Delay of game
* Direct kicks are awarded to the opposing team if one of these fouls is committed (for additional information, refer to FIFA Law 12):
* Handling the ball
* Kicking an opponent
* Hitting an opponent
* Pushing an opponent
* Tripping an opponent
* Holding an opponent
* Any unsportsmanlike conduct
* Slide tackling or any contact with the ball while the player is on the ground.
* A penalty kick is awarded for deliberate handling of the ball that denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity. The penalty kick will be taken 5 yards from the top of the shooting arc and all players should be positioned behind the player taking the penalty kick. If the kick does not result in a goal and the ball is still in the playing field, it is a live ball and play continues from the spot of the ball.
* A goal is not scored if a player kicks or throws the ball into his or her own goal. A corner kick is awarded for the opposing team.
* A goal may only be scored from a player’s offensive end of the field. This prohibits a player from scoring a goal from the center circle on a kickoff.
* Offside is not called in Upward Soccer because of the field size.
* Referees should monitor substitutions and help coaches who have questions. Review the substitution section found in this playbook.
* Slide Tackling is not allowed in Upward Soccer. Players must stay upright and “on their feet” and may not make contact with an opposing player. This does not prevent player from sliding to stop/intercept a ball, but No contact may be made with opposing players.
* Players who commit two fouls resulting in direct kicks, excluding handballs, in the same 6-minute segment must sit out the remainder of that segment. Those players may return during their next scheduled substitution.

**Re-starts**

**Kickoffs**A kick-off is taken from the center circle at the start of each half and after a goal is scored. Kicks must go forward, toward the attacking goal. The ball must touch another attacking player or defensive player before the initial kicker touches the ball again. If the kick does not go forward or the ball is touched a second time by the initial kicker before another player touches the ball, the kick should be retaken. A goal may not be scored from the kick-off, because all goals must be scored from the offensive side of the field. The kick-off is treated similar to a free kick. This means the opposing team must stay outside of the center circle (at least 4 yards away). They also must be on their own half of the field until the first touch on the ball is made, after which they may attempt to win the ball.

**Out-of-bounds**The entire ball must go out-of-bounds to be out of play. If part of the ball is still touching the line, play continues uninterrupted. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 9.



**Corner Kicks**When the ball passes over the goal line by the defending team, the ball should be placed inside the corner arc on the side it went out-of bounds. The defensive team must be at least 5 yards away when the kick is taken. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 17.

**Goal Kicks**When the attacking team kicks the ball over the goal line or if the ball comes to a stop within the shooting arc before entering the goal, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. The ball should be placed on the end line/goal line, 5 yard from the shooting arc on the side in which the ball went out. The defending team must be at least 10 yards away from the player taking the goal. K5 and first- and second-grade divisions must retreat behind midfield until the ball is kicked. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 16.

**Throw-ins**When the ball passes over the sidelines, the last team to touch it last loses possession and the opposing team takes a throw-in. The player throwing the ball back into play must throw the ball over his or her head with both hands, both feet must be touching the ground, and the player must stay behind the sideline while throwing. The defensive team must be at least two yards away from the thrower. It is recommended that the K5 players place the ball on the touchline and kick it back into play. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 15.

**Drop-Ball**A drop-ball will occur between two players; one from each team to restart the game after the official had to stop play for a no-penalty situation. The ball is dropped at the spot where it was last in play unless this happens in the goal arc, in which case it is dropped at the nearest point five yards outside the goal arc. The ball may only be kicked after it has touched the ground. A goal may be scored directly from a drop-ball.