



FAIRHOPE SOCCER SPRING SOCCER GUIDELINES

During the spring season, Fairhope soccer plays small-sided soccer. This approach is very important for player development, as players will find themselves more involved and receiving increased repetitions of all technical aspects of the game. The "Small-Sided" environment is a developmentally appropriate environment for our young soccer players. It is a FUN environment that focuses on the young soccer player.

Here are some of the reasons why we believe, as soccer coaches, administrators, and parents, that our young soccer players are best served playing small-sided games:

1. Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become more skillful with it! ***(Individual technical development)***
2. Because we want our young soccer players to make more, less-complicated decisions during the game! ***(Tactical development)***
3. Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically efficient in the field space they are playing in! ***(Reduced field size)***
4. Because we want our young soccer players to have more individual teaching time with the coach! Fewer players on the field and fewer players on the team will guarantee this! ***(Need to feel worthy and need to feel important)***
5. Because we want our young soccer players to have more, involved playing time in the game! ***(More opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)***
6. Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunity to play on both sides of the ball! ***(More exposure to attacking and defending situations)***
7. Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunities to score goals! ***(Pure excitement)***
8. Because we want to include children of all temperaments, assertive to shy, to have more opportunities to interact with others and the game! ***(Socialization)***

Measurement of Success: We DO NOT measure success on winning and losing.

We emphasize FUN!

Focus on what went right instead of missed opportunities on the field. Success is measured on an individual basis: Player Development, Player Enjoyment, and Character. We want all players to enjoy their time with Fairhope Soccer. However, we also want them to become better soccer players. Finally, most important: we want these players to exhibit Integrity, Character, and Sportsmanship.

We challenge the coaches to lead by example and to be a positive role model.

We also challenge the parents to support this philosophy and encourage developmental, character and sportsmanship. Please emphasize and focus on the development rather than the score.

Remember all aspects of the game should be positive. We are striving to facilitate an environment that is conducive to learning. Children will only attempt new things if they are confident and comfortable with themselves. Please support this concept help continue the development of these soccer player.



Fairhope Soccer Spring Rules

Game Format	Ball Size	Goalie	Referee	Kick In	Length of Quarter (minutes)	Coach Game Involvement
U10 & U12 4 v 4	Size 4	No	Yes	Kick	12-minute quarters/ (4) quarters	On Bench
U8 4 v 4	Size 3	No	Upon availability	Kick	10 min quarters/ (4) quarters	Both Can Run Field/ Ref unless Referee is assigned
U6 4 v 4	Size 3	No	No	Kick	8 min quarters/ (4) quarters	Both Can Run Field/ Ref

*******There is NO OFF-SIDE*******

Parents (Spectators): All spectators must set up chairs on the parent side of the field (opposite of players' benches) at least 3-5 feet from the line and away from the corners. This is for spectator safety as well as the safety of the players on the field! No parents are allowed behind team bench. FSC has background-checked/approved all coaches and assistant coaches. Please, no parents are allowed to remain at the team bench unless they are approved. We ask the coaches to help us enforce this rule.

Breaks: *No stoppage time is kept during play*****

- **4v4 Games:** 2 minute breaks between quarters and 4 minutes for halftime

Game Officiating:

- U6 coaches will officiate games. Please use logic and discretion.
- U8 coaches should stay on bench unless a referee is not assigned.
- U10 & U12 coaches will stay on bench while referee present

Kickoff: There is a kickoff beginning at each quarter. **All age groups will switch sides between quarters** (trade back and forth for the kickoff) Kickoffs can go directly backwards to a teammate.

**First kickoff is determined between game captains at start of game. We recommend Rock, Paper, and Scissors or Pick a number 1-10.

Restarts:

Sidelines: When a ball goes out of play on the sidelines, kick in to continue play.

End-lines: If a ball goes out on the end-lines, play will restart with either a goal kick (from the end line) to the defending team, or a corner kick to the attacking team. (Depending on who was the last to touch the ball before it went out of play).

Indirect Kicks: Restarts for out-of-bounds play and most fouls are indirect (meaning the player cannot shoot the ball directly into the opponent's goal without the ball touching another player).

Direct Kicks: Corner kicks and penalties are direct (meaning the player can score directly without another player touching the ball).

Four Yards: For all other restarts other than goal kicks (corner kicks, kickoffs, throw-ins, penalties) the other team must be 4 yards away from the ball before it is live again.

Handballs: Coaches/referees will call a handball **ONLY if it is blatant and deliberate**. The game will restart at the point of the handball with an indirect kick.

Fouls: If there is a blatant foul, coaches/referee should stop the game, explain to the player what the foul was and the other team will get an indirect kick.

Build Out: If the offensive team shoots and misses, etc. it's a goal kick – the defensive team will then kick the goal kick from the back line placed in the general vicinity of their goal. The offensive team must **back it up to midfield** (half-way mark) and may not cross back over until the defensive team kicks the ball and play is live again. This is called "build out," and the intent is to encourage the kids to learn to build plays/learn to pass without pressure.

Goal Box: An attacking player cannot touch the ball while it is in the box. If an attacking player touches the ball, a goal kick is awarded. A defender may "sweep" through the box to protect the goal but only in an effort to kick the ball. Neither the defensive nor the offensive team may hang out around the goal or goal box. Offense may not shoot from inside the box– the goal won't count if originated from that location. This goes for corner kicks as well. No offensive players in the goal box!

No Cherry Picking: A cherry picker is a child that is told to hang out around their offensive goal, ready to score if a ball gets loose. Likewise, no child should be forced to be a permanent defender or goalie. Either way that child is removed from the experience of the game.

Short-sided games are meant to be high scoring and exciting for ALL players on the field.

No Slide-Tackles--No Headers

Goals: In order for a goal to stand, all attacking players of the team in possession must be making an effort to get to the opposing half 1: as the ball crosses the goalline or 2: as the player strikes the ball. In order for the goal to count, the ball has to be in the attacking half of field when the shot is taken. If the shot is taken in the defending half, the goal will not count & restart with a goal kick.