



SDYSA Prairie League - Rulebook

Version 1.0 (Aug 2026)

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1. League Mission

The purpose of the SDYSA Prairie League is to support organizations and their teams affiliated with the US Soccer Federation by providing opportunities to:

- Experience consistent and meaningful competition
- Identify the appropriate level of competition to support team and individual development
- Experience a long-term scalable league pathway

The SDYSA Prairie League is governed by SDYSA, whose responsibility is to:

- Enforce league standards and rules
- Oversee scheduling
- Referee support and guidelines

- Competition integrity
- League participant requirements

SDYSA recognizes the following needs of youth soccer organizations and their teams across our region.

- Variability of club structures
- Age-appropriate travel expectations
- Appropriate levels of competition
- Minimization of administrative responsibilities for volunteer-run organization

2. Code of Conduct

All players, coaches, parents, spectators, and officials are expected to:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Accept referee decisions.
- Encourage positive behavior.
- Avoid abusive language.
- Never bully or intimidate others.
- Promote fair play.

The league has zero tolerance for:

- Fighting
- Threats
- Racism
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Violence toward officials

Registering teams, must complete the Prairie League Code of Conduct

3. Player Eligibility

Players must:

- Be properly registered within a competitive (U11 – U14) or recreational level (U9 – U10) with an association governed by USSF.
- Meet age requirements.
- Submit any required medical forms.
- Wear approved equipment.
- Play only on their registered team unless approved by league administration.

4. Team Formation

Team formations for the SDYSA Prairie League shall be structured to align with Prairie League Division context.

By providing a tiered model of participation for U9 - U14 teams, the SDYSA Prairie League serves to create a pathway for all teams to experience a fun and developmentally appropriate league experience founded upon these principles.

The SDYSA Prairie League will provide a *'Performance Pathway'* and a *'Developmental Pathway'* for participating teams.

- The *'Performance Pathway'* will be broken down into two segments: P1 (Advanced) and P2 (Intermediate)

- **P1 (Advanced):** This segment of the Performance Pathway is for U11 - U14 teams performing at the highest level of competition. P1 teams are participating in regional and local tournament competition and participating in the highest division offerings these tournaments provide. For example: Prairie Cup (Gold and/or Silver Divisions), or HIT (Gold and/or Silver Divisions) - KS. Teams participating in the P1 segment of the SDYSA Prairie League will make a full commitment to all Prairie League dates, expecting 6 games minimum, across three event-based weekends. Scores and standings will be kept.
- **P2 (Intermediate):** This segment of the Performance Pathway is for U11 - U14 teams performing at a more intermediate level of competition. P2 teams may be participating in regional and/or local tournament competitions such as Prairie Cup (Silver and/or Bronze Divisions), or HIT (Silver and/or Bronze Divisions) - KS. Teams participating in the P2 segment of the SDYSA Prairie League will make a full commitment to all Prairie League dates, expecting 6 games minimum, across three event-based weekends. Scores and standings will be kept.
- The *'Developmental Pathway'* is for U9/U10 teams whose experience is participating in localized tournament offerings within their state and/or region. **Specific to the Fall 2026 season** of the SDYSA Prairie League, U9/U10 teams will have the opportunity to participate in one event-based weekend. Scores and standings will not be kept. Teams can expect a minimum of 3 games.

Team rosters must be present for every match and shall be presented to the match officials prior to each game.

Recommended roster sizes:

- **7v7:** 9–11 players
- **9v9:** 12–14 players
- **11v11:** 15–18 players

Every player should receive meaningful playing time during each game.

5. Equipment

Required:

- Soccer jersey
- Shorts
- Shin guards (mandatory)
- Soccer socks covering shin guards
- Soccer cleats (no metal studs)
- Properly inflated soccer ball

Recommended Ball Sizes

- U9–U12: Size 4
- U13–U14: Size 5

Goalkeepers must wear a jersey that clearly distinguishes them from field players and officials.

Jewelry is prohibited except for medical-alert items.

6. Playing Formats

U9–U10

- 7 vs 7
- Build-out line recommended
- Goalkeeper allowed
- Size 4 ball

U11–U12

- 9 vs 9
- Size 4 ball

U13–U14

- 11 vs 11
- Size 5 ball

7. Match Rules

Matches follow the current IFAB Laws of the Game except where modified by this rulebook.

Kickoff

- Home team chooses bench.
- Visiting team kicks off first.
- Teams switch ends at halftime.

Scoring

A goal counts when the entire ball crosses the goal line between the posts and under the crossbar.

Offside

The offside law applies for all U9–U14 divisions. For U9–U10, leagues may choose to modify enforcement in conjunction with a build-out line if appropriate.

Restarts

- Throw-in
- Goal kick
- Corner kick
- Free kicks
- Penalty kicks

All follow the IFAB Laws of the Game.

8. Game Duration

U9–U10

- Two 25-minute halves
- 5-minute halftime

U11–U12

- Two 30-minute halves
- 5-minute halftime

U13–U14

- Two 35-minute halves
- 10-minute halftime

Games may be shortened due to weather, darkness, or field conditions.

9. Substitutions

Unlimited substitutions are allowed:

- Before throw-ins (with referee approval)
- Goal kicks
- After goals
- Halftime
- Injury stoppages

Substituted players may re-enter the game.

Coaches are encouraged to provide equitable playing time over the course of the season.

10. Officiating

USSF Certified or league-approved referees will officiate games.

The referee has final authority on:

- Fouls
- Misconduct
- Goals
- Timekeeping
- Match suspension

Referee decisions are final.

11. Standings

Point system:

- Win: 3 points
- Tie: 1 point
- Loss: 0 points

Tie-breakers

1. Head-to-head result
2. Goal differential (maximum +5 per game)
3. Goals allowed
4. Goals scored
5. Coin toss

Standings and scores will be kept for teams participating in the U11- U14 age groups

Standing and scores will not be kept for teams participating in the U9 – U10 age groups

12. Weather Policy

Games will be suspended immediately for:

- Lightning
- Dangerous field conditions
- Severe weather
- Unsafe visibility

Lightning Rule

Play stops immediately.

Games resume only after 30 minutes have passed since the last observed lightning strike or thunder.

League officials determine cancellations.

13. Discipline

Yellow Card

Warning for misconduct.

Examples:

- Unsporting behavior

- Persistent fouling
- Dissent

Red Card

Player must leave the game.

Examples:

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct
- Offensive language
- Denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity

Players receiving a red card may face additional league discipline.

The SDYSA Prairie League administration will reference and implement the USSF RAP policy.

<https://www.ussoccer.com/rap>

14. Coaches Responsibilities

Coaches shall:

- Promote sportsmanship.
- Teach fundamentals.
- Respect officials.
- Ensure player safety.
- Encourage all players.
- Maintain appropriate sideline behavior.

Coaches must never:

- Argue aggressively with officials.
- Use abusive language.
- Ridicule players.
- Encourage dangerous play.

15. Parent & Spectator Expectations

Parents and spectators should:

- Cheer positively.
- Respect referees.
- Encourage all players.
- Allow coaches to coach.
- Avoid coaching from the sidelines.

Unsportsmanlike conduct may result in removal from the facility.

16. Safety & Injury Procedures

Player safety is the league's highest priority.

- Coaches should have a basic first-aid kit.
- Head injuries require immediate evaluation.
- A player suspected of having a concussion shall be removed from play and may not return until cleared in accordance with league policy and applicable state law.
- Players with bleeding injuries must leave the field until the bleeding is controlled.

Emergency services should be contacted whenever necessary.

17. Championship & Awards

The SDYSA Prairie League will recognize

- Regular Season Champion (U11 – U14)
- Team Sportsmanship Award

18. League Administration

The SDYSA Prairie League Administrative Staff has authority to:

- Interpret league rules.
- Reschedule matches.
- Resolve disputes.
- Issue disciplinary actions.
- Modify procedures when necessary for player safety or league operations.

League decisions are final.

Sportsmanship Pledge

Players

"I will respect my teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and the game. I will always play fairly, do my best, and demonstrate good sportsmanship."

Coaches

"I will teach, encourage, and lead by example while placing player development and safety above winning."

Parents

"I will support every player, respect officials, encourage positive behavior, and remember that youth sports are for the children."