

Arlington Soccer Club Rules Summary for Grades 3-4 In-Town Games

Items in italics are new in Fall 2024 to be in conformity with BAYS rules.

Number of Players: *7v7 (minimum of 5 to begin/continue play)*

Size ball: # 4

Time: **Two 30-minute halves** and a 5-minute half time break.

In addition to (or in modification of) the regular laws of the game, the following will apply to ASC Grade 3-4 In-Town games.

1. Educating players about the rules is an important part of the referee's job at this age. Briefly explain the rules if players appear confused (15 seconds should be enough—do not interrupt the flow of the game).
2. Free Kicks: Direct and Indirect free kicks are awarded. Opponents should stand *at least 8 yards* away from the ball.
3. Penalty Kicks: *Penalty Kicks are taken 8 yards from the goal line. Prior to the kick being taken, all players except the goalkeeper and the kicker must retreat to the halfway line until the kick is taken.*
4. Goal Kicks:
 - Place the ball 5-6 yards from the goal line—lines are not always marked, so goalkeeper and referee use their judgement.
 - Defensive team must retreat to the midfield line. Cones on each side are helpful to mark the midfield line. The ball must touch the field or a player in the defensive half of the field. If the ball crosses midfield without touching the ground or a player, the opposing team will be awarded an indirect kick at midfield.
5. Goalkeeper Possession:
 - The goalie may punt, throw, or kick the ball to teammates.
 - *Defensive team must retreat to the midfield line.* The ball must touch the field or a player in the defensive half of the field. If the ball crosses midfield without touching the ground or a player, the opposing team will be awarded an indirect kick at midfield.
 - Pass-backs to the goalkeeper are rare at this age. The goalie cannot use their hands to pick up a pass-back or throw-in from a teammate. If this occurs, give a verbal warning and let play continue. If it happens repeatedly, give an indirect free kick at least 15 yards from the goal.
6. Throw-in: Warn players if they commit a foul throw and explain what they did wrong. A second chance may be given at referee's discretion. Be consistent about awarding second chances (or not) to both teams.
7. Offside: Off-side rules do not apply.
8. Substitutions:
 - Teams can sub on their own throw-in or on any goal kick (not on corners), after a goal is scored, at half-time and at injuries (injured player can be subbed and other team can sub one player too). If one team substitutes on a throw-in, then the other team may do so too.
 - Substitutions should occur at midfield, not off the bench.
9. Slide Tackles, Heading, and Aggressive Play: No slide tackles, no heading. If there is an infraction, the opposing team will be awarded an indirect kick and the referee should explain it to the player. The referee can ask coaches to sub an overly aggressive player to give them a break.
10. Spectators: Parents and players should be on opposite sides of the field. The two teams should be on the same side of the field. No one should be standing behind the goals or the goal line.
11. Jewelry: All jewelry must be removed. Medical alert bracelets can be taped. No earrings, friendship bracelets, watches, hats, etc.
12. Lopsided Game Management: It is the coaches' responsibility to prevent and to manage lopsided scores. Referees can remind coaches of this policy if the score differential is 4 goals or more. Winning coaches can take several actions: Reduce the number of players on the field; Put stronger players on defense, in goal, or on the bench; Encourage possession rather than shooting. Coaches can also swap players and use pinnies. The goal is to have an evenly-matched game. Referees should NEVER use their whistle or their authority to influence the outcome of the game; referees must enforce the rules and ensure fair play for all.