# Manual for Youth Referees

The AYSO National Support & Training Center
12501 S. Isis Avenue
Hawthorne, CA 90250
TEL: 800.872.2976
FAX:  310.643.5310
www.ayso.org

All rights reserved. © 2010 American Youth Soccer Organization

Reproduction in whole or in part is encouraged provided no changes are made to content and the “2009-2010 AYSO Manual for Youth Referees” is referenced.

# Contents


| | |
|---|---|
| **Personal Information** | **5** |
| **How Do I Use This Handbook?** | **6** |
| **What Should I Wear To Referee?** | **6** |
| **What Should I Look For When I Check The Field?** | **6** |
| **What Should I Look For When I Check The Players?** | **7** |
| **How Do I Pick The Game Ball?** | **8** |
| **How Do I Work With Assistant Referees Or Club Linesmen?** | **8** |
| **What Do I Do When I Am The Assistant Referee?** | **9** |
| **How Long Should The Game Be?** | **10** |
| **How Should I Handle Substitutions?** | **10** |
| **What If I Make A Mistake?** | **10** |
| **What Do I Do If A Player Is Injured?** | **11** |
| **What Do I Do If A Player Is Causing A Problem?** | **11** |
| **What If A Spectator Is Causing A Problem?** | **12** |
| **What If A Coach Is Causing A Problem?** | **12** |
| **What Do I Do In Bad Weather?** | **13** |
| **How Can I Learn More?** | **13** |
| **Notes** | **15** |

# Personal Information

My Name is _____

Regional Referee Administrator _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Youth Coordinator _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

My Mentor's Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

My Referee Buddy's Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Assignor's Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Other Important Contact Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

## How Do I Use This Handbook?

This manual is designed for your personal use. You should begin by filling in the personal information at the beginning of this handbook. Enter the names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the key people in your region who support you. When you have a question or a problem, you can get in touch with one of them to get help.

## What Should I Wear To Referee?

Your region should provide you with some or all of your uniform. The uniform consists of your badge, a referee shirt, black shorts, black socks with three white stripes at the top and black shoes.

Get all the pieces of your uniform together the night before you have a game to do. Be sure everything is clean and ready to wear.

Your shirt should be tucked in, your socks should be pulled up and you should have your correct badge in place when you enter the field to do your games. Looking like a referee will help you get the respect of the players, coaches and spectators and will make your job easier.

Don't forget to bring your whistle, your watch, a coin, a pencil or pen and something to write on with you as you enter the field. The coaches should each provide you with a line-up card.

## What Should I Look For When I Check The Field?

Safety is the most important thing. Make sure the goals are safe. You should not be able to tip them over. If you can tip them over, this must be fixed before it is safe to play. This is what we mean when we say the GOALS MUST BE ANCORED.

Check the field for anything that could hurt a player like holes or rocks or twigs. Make sure these things are taken care of. If you can't take care of the problem yourself, you can always ask the coaches for assistance.

The field should be marked and the markings should be easy to see. Again let the person in charge of marking the fields know if there is a problem.

If you encounter problems on the field, such as ant hills or holes in the field, be sure to notify your Referee Administrator or Fields Coordinator.

## What Should I Look For When I Check The Players?

When you check the players before the game, make sure they have the required uniform. The five things that make up a uniform all begin with “S”.

- Shirt
- Shorts
- Shinguards
- Socks
- Shoes

The socks should be long and completely cover the shinguards. All the players on the team should be wearing the same color shirt except for the goalkeeper whose shirt color should be different. The goalkeeper may wear gloves as long as you think the gloves are not dangerous. In cold weather, players can wear sweatpants or extra shirts under their uniforms.

Also make sure none of the players are wearing anything that could be dangerous to them or to anyone else. Jewelry is not allowed. That means no watches, no bracelets, no necklaces, no rings and no earrings. Earrings must be removed. Putting tape over jewelry doesn’t fix the problem.

No one can play with a cast or splint even if it is padded. You can play with a knee brace as long as there is nothing dangerous to the player wearing the brace or any other player.

You can also play with glasses, a hearing aid, braces on your teeth or a mouthguard.

## How Do I Pick The Game Ball?

In some regions the league provides the game ball. In other regions the teams provide the game ball. You should ask your mentor or advisor where the game ball will be. For U-6 and U-8 divisions, you will use a size 3 ball. For U-10 and U-12, you will use a size 4 ball. For U-14, U-16 and U-19, use a size 5 ball. Check to make sure the ball is safe and properly inflated.

## How Do I Work With Assistant Referees Or Club Linesmen?

Club Linesmen are not the same as Assistant Referees. Club Linesmen are usually recruited from the sidelines and should only be asked to raise the flag when the ball completely crosses over the line. You will probably need to demonstrate to the Club Linesmen how to judge when the ball goes “out”.

Assistant Referees are trained and certified and they can assist in many ways. Here are some of the things you will probably want them to do:

- Help with safety inspections of the field and the players.
- Signal when the ball goes out of play over the touchline and who gets the throw in.
- When the ball goes out of play over the goal line (and it wasn’t a goal) they should signal for a goal kick or corner kick.

- Help see if a goal is scored and be ready to help if you need it.
- Signal when an offside infraction has occurred.
- Help keep track of time.
- Watch for fouls you couldn't see.
- Help control the match.

Be sure to talk to the Assistant Referees before the game begins. Talk about what you would like them to do to help you. Answer any questions they have. Don't forget to thank them after the game.

## What Do I Do When I Am The Assistant Referee?

The Assistant Referee is there to "assist" and support the referee. The referee will tell you which things he/she would like to have help with. Your tasks will probably include the list in the previous section but there may be some other things the referee would like you to do.

Your job as the assistant is to "assist; not insist". If the referee overrules your signal, you should drop your flag and go along with his/her decision. Be sure you understand any directions the referee gives you. Ask questions if you don't. If something is not covered by the referee in the pre-game talk and you are not sure what you should do, ask.

At the half, you can talk about anything you don't understand. Tell the referee if you are seeing something on the field that he/she should watch out for. Use this time to prepare for the second half so you can do a good second half.

At the end of the game, it is helpful to talk over what has happened in the game. It is a good chance to learn from another referee.

## How Long Should The Game Be?

The length of the game may be different in different regions. It depends on whether you are playing short-sided games or full-length games. Sometimes regions will shorten the length of games because there aren't enough fields to fit in all the games.

Standard times will be printed on the line-up card but the best thing for you to do is check with whoever is in charge of these things (usually the Regional Referee Administrator) or check with the person who runs the youth referee program. They will be able to tell you how long games should be in each division.

## How Should I Handle Substitutions?

In AYSO games, every player must play at least half of the game. To make this easy, substitution is allowed at these times during a game:

- About halfway through the first half
- At halftime
- About halfway through the second half
- Anytime for an injury

When you call for substitutions in the middle of the first half or the middle of the second half, it doesn't have to be exactly halfway. You should substitute around the midpoint when a natural stoppage of play has occurred, like the ball over the touchline or goal line. When you restart the game, just use the correct restart for that stoppage. For example, if you substituted right after the ball went over the touchline, start with a throw-in.

## What If I Make A Mistake?

The first thing you should do is relax; every referee has made mistakes. Then decide if you can correct it. If you pointed the wrong way on a throw in or foul and you have not restarted the game you can correct yourself. If play has already been restarted

then you can not correct your mistake. You have to let it go and try to do better next time. Don't try to 'make it up' to the team by making a call you know is wrong. Just call the game as carefully as you can.

## What Do I Do If A Player Is Injured?

If a younger player seems to be injured, you should stop play right away and check the player. Invite the coach on to the field to take care of the player and help him/her off the field. If the player wants to continue after a few moments rest you can welcome him back on the field. If the player is unable to continue, the coach may send in a substitute.

For older players, you may want to wait a few moments before stopping play for an injury. When you should stop play right away and when you might want to wait is something you should talk to your mentor about.

## What Do I Do If A Player Is Causing A Problem?

There are a number of things you can do. If possible, it is better to start with the mildest action and work your way up, if you need to.

- Speak quietly to the player who is acting up. It is a good idea if others cannot hear what you are saying. Try to let the player know you saw what he/she did and you did not like it without giving him a long lecture. Try to be as positive as you can. You could say, "You're a better player than this." Or "You're too good a player to do things like this."

- If the player does something after you have spoken to him, let the player know what you will do. You might say, "I know you want to keep playing but you must stop doing this. I don't want to make you leave the field. It's up to you."

- Finally, if the player continues to act badly you will have to send him out of the game.

Remember we don't use our red or yellow cards with players in the U-10, U-8 or U-6 divisions.

## What If A Spectator Is Causing A Problem?

There are several people on the field that can help you deal with a problem spectator. Hopefully you have an adult referee who is working the game with you or an adult mentor near by. Ask for their assistance when dealing with a spectator. If that is not an option, then ask for help from the coaches. When talking to the coaches about a spectator issue, use the words "Coach, we have a problem that we need to resolve" , not "Coach, you have a problem, please take care of it". Remember, we are all on the same team, coaches, referees, and spectators, all working for the kids. Sometimes teammates need a little reminder every now and then. The key thing to remember is DO SOMETHING.

If you have issues with a spectator make sure you write it up in the appropriate report and make sure you let your Referee Administrator or Coach Administrator know.

Always have someone to assist you when dealing with spectator's. Don't ever feel like you have to deal with them by yourself.

## What If A Coach Is Causing A Problem?

It is just as important to deal with a coach who is causing a problem. Coaches have received training and know what is expected from them. They serve as role models to their teams. If you have a coach that is causing a problem, once again, get the adult referee on the match with you, or your adult mentor to help you out. If that is not an option, ask the opposing coach to help

you deal with the problem coach. What ever you decide to do, always remember, DO SOMETHING.

Finally, report the problem to the Regional Referee Administrator. No abuse of a youth referee is acceptable, but administrators can't fix it if they don't know about it.

## What Do I Do In Bad Weather?

Thunderstorms can be very dangerous. If you hear thunder or see lightning, stop the game and clear the field immediately.

"If you can see it - flee it; if you can hear it – clear it."

Soccer games are often played in the rain or even snow. But if the field is under water or if the wind is blowing the ball around when it is placed on the ground, you may need to stop the game.

In very hot weather, you should encourage the players to drink plenty of water and cool off. SAFETY FIRST!!!

## How Can I Learn More?

There are lots of things you can do to learn more and become a better referee.

- Do as many games as you can. You will learn something from every game you do.
- Watch other referees. See what other referees do and ask them questions about anything you don't understand.
- Ask a more experienced referee to watch you do a game. Ask him/her to give you advice on how to improve.
- Take more training. Attend referee classes whenever you can to learn more about the referee's job.

- Read. AYSO has a number of books and manuals that can help you learn more about the game of soccer and what a good referee does. Take a look at the AYSO edition of FIFA Laws of the Game; AYSO National Rules and Regulations; and Guidance for Referees and Coaches.

# Notes