



Midwest Soccer Association's Indoor Premier League Rules 2026-2027 Season

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League Purpose and Disclaimer

The Indoor Premier League (IPL) is operated by the Midwest Soccer Association (MSA). The purpose of the Indoor Premier League is to provide a professionally-run, competitive soccer league in the winter for high school aged players. **While teams are expected to want to win, they are also expected to compete with integrity and with sportsmanship.**

Midwest Soccer Association reserves the right to amend these Rules at any time.

It is the responsibility of each team to provide accurate contact information to the Midwest Soccer Association. Every club and team is required to provide at least one (1) email address and one (1) phone number of a club/team contact; however, we recommend providing more than one of each.

It is the responsibility of the club and team contact(s) to communicate with the rest of their organization and/or team the pertinent information received from MSA, including but not limited to these Rules.

MSA will communicate primarily by email, and it is the responsibility of the club contacts, team contacts, and team members to check their emails frequently, as MSA will often communicate important information via email that requires action from teams.

If MSA requests a response from a club or team and does not receive a response within 48 hours, MSA may decide and/or move forward without having received the requested response.

Section 1: Game Information

Age groups are defined using the US Soccer Age Group guideline outlined below, based on birth year, August 1 – July 31. An illustration for the 2026-2027 seasons is outlined below:

2026-2027 Age Group Information

U15 August 1, 2011 – July 31, 2012

U16 August 1, 2010 – July 31, 2011

U17 August 1, 2009 – July 31, 2010

U18 August 1, 2008 – July 31, 2009

U19 August 1, 2007 - July 31, 2008

Game Format:

	U15-U19
Number of Players	7v7
Minimum Needed to Play	4
Maximum Roster Size	14
Length of Half (minutes)	20
Length of Halftime (minutes)	3
Field Boundary	Use of boards/walls – kick-ins for restarts
Offside	No
Subs	On the fly
Size of Ball	5

Important:

- The Number of Players includes a goalkeeper.
- Maximum Roster Size is a limitation on the number of players who can be dressed and present to play in any one game. A team **may have a roster that exceeds the number of players listed** in this chart, but for any given game, the team may not have more players present than the number listed above.
- Stoppage time is not added to games.
- Games tied at the end of regulation will remain tied unless specified otherwise (i.e. playoff).
- The home team will supply an appropriately pumped ball for all games.
- Games will start at the scheduled time. If teams are not ready to play at the scheduled start time, the referee will start the clock.
- If, after 10 minutes past the scheduled start time, a team has not taken the field, that team will forfeit the game.

Games Ended Early:

If a game ends early due to the conduct of a player/coach/spectator, the offending team will forfeit, resulting in a recorded score of a 3-0 loss for that team. If a game ends early due to “acts of god,” the score at the time of cancelation will be the final result.

Section 2: Player Equipment

- Shoes must meet US Soccer specifications – cleats, turf, or flats are allowed
- Shin guards for all players are MANDATORY and **must be the appropriate size** for each player's height, based on standard sizing.
- No jewelry of any kind may be worn (excluding corrective glasses). Corrective glasses must be made of plastic and designed for sports.
- Players wearing protective casts may be allowed to play only with the referee's approval. The cast must be made or wrapped with soft material.
- When the color of the jerseys is similar or identical, and/or if the referee requests a change, the home team is obligated to change colors. Our guideline is for home team jerseys to be light in color and away team jerseys to be dark in color.

Uniforms

- Each team is required to have at least two different colored jerseys, at least one of them a “darker” color and at least one of them a “lighter” color. Every player must have at least one darker jersey and one lighter jersey with them at every game, in case of the need to change jersey color as outlined above, or as requested by the referee or MSA staff.
- Goalkeepers must wear a jersey color that distinguishes them and is obviously different than the jersey colors of the outfield players on both teams. Goalkeepers must change into a different color, or put on a pinnie, if requested by the referee.
- All players from both teams may wear the same or similar colored shorts and socks, as long as the jerseys color complies with the rules herein.
- Each player on a given team must have an easily visible number on the back of his/her jersey, and no two players on the same team may have the same number on their jersey.
- The referee and/or MSA staff shall match the jersey number of each player with the player's name before the start of the game. Players shall not change their jersey number during the game, unless extenuating circumstances occur (i.e. blood on a jersey), in which case, the referee must be informed and approve of the change.

Section 3: Substitutions

Substitutions may be made “on the fly” without stoppage of play. Players entering the field can only enter once the exiting player has left the field of play, and the players must exit and enter the field in front of their team's Technical Area, as defined in Section 6 herein.

Section 4: Fields and Other Specifications

Fields have boards, which are in play. If the ball hits the net above the walls or exits the field, the ball is considered out of play, and the team that did not last touch it will in-bound the ball with a kick-in. If the ball goes out of play on the sides of the field, the kick-in will take place at the nearest point to where it exited, within one (1) yard of the wall. If the ball goes out of play on either end of the field, the kick-in will take place as either a goal kick (inside the goal area) or as a corner kick from the spot designated on the field. **Kick-ins are all indirect.**

If the ball touches the ceiling or net above the field, a free kick will take place at the spot on the field directly below the point at which the ball touched the ceiling, unless it touches directly above the goal area. If the ball touches the ceiling directly above either goal area, the restart will occur either at the top of the goal area line or as a goal kick, depending on which team earns the restart. **Free kicks as a result of the ball hitting the ceiling are direct.**

Section 5: Offside

Offside is not in effect.

Section 6: Spectator and Technical Areas

- All coaches and players will remain in the Technical Area when not actively playing in the game.
- Spectators must remain outside of the field of play.
- No coaching may take place from outside the Technical Area.
- The Technical Area is the enclosed area with the bench
- The doors of the Technical Area must remain closed unless a player is actively entering or exiting for the purpose of a substitution

Section 7: Coaches

All teams are required to have at least one (1) coach and may have additional coaches if so desired.

To be a coach or member of a team's staff, an individual must complete and provide proof of a valid and current Coach Pass with a US Soccer Member Organization (i.e. USSSA, US Club, USYS, AYSO, etc.) and comply with Safeguarding measures required by US Soccer and SafeSport, including, but not necessarily limited to, passing a background check, completing SafeSport training, and being in good standing with The U.S. Center for SafeSport and US Soccer.

Staff Guidelines:

MSA recommends the following of coaches and staff:

- Be of sufficient maturity and moral character to accept the responsibility required of coaching youth
- Consider the age of the coaches relative to the age of the players they are assigned to coach. For example, it would be inappropriate for a 17-year-old person to coach a U18 team.
- Head Coaches should possess sufficient knowledge to carry out the responsibility of coaching the game of soccer.

MSA Requires the following of coaches and staff:

- Conduct themselves appropriately before, during, and after games. Coaches who are unable to control their emotions, or who verbally or physically abuse players, other coaches, parents, league staff, or referees, shall be disciplined under the procedures outlined herein, and/or as otherwise determined by the MSA staff.

Section 8: Coach, Teams, and Player Game Identification

IPL staff and/or game referees will have official rosters for all teams and will complete the check-in process prior to each game. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that MSA is aware of the most up-to-date roster. Only players and coaches listed on the official roster may participate in any IPL game, unless prior written MSA approval is given. In order to be listed on a team's official roster, each player must complete the required liability waiver provided by MSA.

Check-In Process:

Before each game, referees and/or MSA staff will review each team's roster for completeness and accuracy, as well as ensure that each player's name is matched to a unique jersey number.

If a player or coach is not properly listed on a roster, MSA staff should be contacted to validate the player's/coach's roster status. The player/coach in question is ineligible to participate until this validation has occurred. If unable to validate a player's or coach's roster status, the player/coach is ineligible to participate in the game.

Section 9: Referees

Referees are as much a part of a soccer game as the coaches and players. The triumvirate of coach-player-referee shall always strive to perform at their best. It is also understood that this same triumvirate will also commit errors. Only the captain(s) designated with a visible armband shall be authorized to address the referees concerning aspects of the game in progress. Judgements made by the referee and the assistant referees during a game are considered final and are not subject to debate. **Referees are**

well within their right to send coaches, players, and/or spectators off (i.e. issue a Red Card) before, during, or after a match.

There will be a one-man referee crew for all games. MSA is responsible for providing referees for all games, whether directly or through the services of a Referee Assignor. Referees will be licensed by US Soccer.

Any dissent, disrespect, threats, abuse, or unsporting behavior toward referees by any player, coach, spectator, or anyone else present at a game will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action as outlined in this document, and/or as otherwise determined by MSA.

MSA will, *at a minimum*, follow the US Soccer Referee Abuse Prevention Guidelines.

Any complaints about decisions made by a referee or a referee assignor can be reported to MSA staff. Disciplinary action may be taken against those who routinely do not uphold the rules, or who routinely report unfounded complaints.

Section 10: Issuance of Cards and Disciplinary Matters

Yellow Cards and Red Cards are issued for many types of fouls and offenses in accordance with the IFAB and FIFA Laws of the Game. In addition to the IFAB and FIFA Laws, and in addition to the consequences outlined below, **if a player receives a Yellow Card or Red Card, that player's team will play with one (1) less player for two (2) minutes.** In the case of a Yellow Card, the player receiving the card may continue to play after serving the two (2)-minute suspension. In the case of a Red Card, the player receiving the card must leave the premises for the remainder of the game, but may be replaced by another player after the aforementioned two (2)-minute penalty.

- A player or coach receiving his/her first Yellow Card may continue to participate in the game. The player can continue to play and does not need to be substituted, but the coach may elect to substitute the player, in which case the referee shall allow the substitution.
- A player or coach receiving a second Yellow Card in a game is considered ejected (sent off) from the game and must promptly leave the vicinity of the field. The ejected player or coach cannot be within sight or sound of the field. Two (2) Yellow Cards are equal to one (1) or Red Card. The game will not be restarted until the ejected player or coach is no longer visible and/or within hearing distance of the field. If the ejected player or coach does not leave the field or go beyond the distance of sight and sound of the field, the referee shall end the game, and the result will be a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team.
- A player or coach who receives an ejection (i.e. Red Card) from the referee must sit out at a minimum the remainder of that game plus his/her next IPL game (in some instances of violent conduct, the length of the suspension may be extended at the discretion of MSA). **An ejected player may be replaced by another player during the game in which the Red Card was issued,**

after the two (2)-minute penalty of playing with one (1) less player. An ejected coach MUST be replaced by another team official who is on the official roster. The game will not be restarted until the ejected player or coach is no longer visible and/or within hearing distance of the field. If the ejected player or coach does not leave the field or go beyond the distance of sight and sound of the field, the referee shall end the game, and the result will be a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team.

- Players or coaches who receive two (2) Red Cards during a season will be suspended from further league play until a review of the situation is conducted by MSA and an official suspension length is determined by MSA. Such a review must be requested by the team official(s) of the ejected individual before consideration to lift the suspension is made. During a suspension, the suspended individual may not be within sight or sound of the field before, during, or after a game.
- If player, coach, or spectator is ejected from a match, the **referee and staff from BOTH participating teams must notify MSA immediately** after the conclusion of the game.
- A coach who receives a Red Card may be subject to further sanctions or disciplinary measures beyond suspension, as determined by MSA.
- It is the responsibility of the coach and/or team/club staff to withhold ejected individuals from games during a suspension. Any violation of this requirement will be considered a separate offense and will result in consequences, to be determined by MSA, including but not limited to the game(s) in which the suspended individual was present will be forfeited.
- The Referee has the discretionary authority to suspend or terminate a game at any time, due to the elements, interference by spectators, or for other causes he or she deems such a stoppage to be necessary. When the Referee terminates a match due to the conduct or actions of one team or its player(s), coach(es), and/or spectator(s), the game will be scored as a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team, and an appropriate fine will be issued by MSA. If the termination of a game is due to the conduct of both teams, the game will be deemed “no contest” and further disciplinary action will be taken by the MSA staff.
- MSA and the IPL believe that there is no reasonable reason that a coach, administrator, or spectator should be sent off. Adult participants should keep this in mind when conducting themselves.

Section 11: Schedules and Team Placement

1. Team Placement

- a. MSA will place teams in divisions and age groups at their sole discretion, with the goal of creating the most developmentally appropriate soccer experience possible for all players.
Teams may be moved into a new division mid-season if deemed necessary and/or appropriate by MSA.
- b. Clubs and/or team may request placement in a certain division or age group, and MSA will consider such requests, but it is ultimately the decision of MSA to determine in which division and age group a team will be placed.
- c. If a team requests to be placed in a specific division or age group, they must do so with a good faith intent to provide the most appropriate development experience for their teams and players. If MSA concludes that a team requested to be placed in an age group or division for another reason, the team's officials will be subject to sanctions and/or penalties by MSA.

2. Rosters

- a. Players may only be rostered with one club within the IPL.
- b. Players may be rostered on multiple teams within the same club in the IPL.
- c. During any given season, players may move from one IPL club to another only with approval of MSA staff.
- d. While clubs have the flexibility to allow players to play with multiple teams within the IPL, it is expected that this be utilized for the purpose of positive player development needs, and **NOT for the purpose winning a game** by having a better-skilled player play with a team in a lesser-skilled division.

3. Scheduling

- a. All scheduling of games will be done by MSA.
- b. Games will be scheduled on the days of the week, within the dates of the season, as advertised by MSA at the time of registration.
- c. Once MSA publishes the season schedule, games will not be rescheduled except for extenuating or unexpected circumstances, as determined necessary or reasonable by MSA (i.e. "acts of god"), and only if rescheduling is administratively feasible (i.e. available dates/times). If a game is canceled without an opportunity to reschedule within the timeframe of the season (i.e. "act of god" on the last day of the season), MSA will make reasonable efforts to reschedule the game outside of the originally planned game dates, but if rescheduling is not reasonably practicable, the game will not be played.

Section 12: Scores and Results

1. Game Scores & Results

- a. Scores from games shall be reported by the game referee to the MSA staff as soon as possible following the conclusion of each game.
- b. MSA will post the results of games on the league's online schedule as soon as administratively feasible. In no case will a score be published with more than a 6-goal differential.
- c. If a game is a playoff or championship game, and it is tied after regulation, a winner will be decided by a penalty kick shootout, best of 5 shots. If tied after 5 penalty takers, the shootout will continue on a "one for one" basis until a winner is determined.

2. Standings

- a. The official standings of each age group and division will be kept by MSA, and unofficial results will be published online.
- b. Teams will receive three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a draw, and zero (0) points for a loss.
- c. If more than one team has the same number of points, the team with the higher goal differential will be higher on the official standings. **Goal differential is limited to a maximum of six (6) goals for each game, for the purposes of official standings.**
- d. The score for a forfeited game, for the purposes of goal differential and standings, will be recorded as a 0-3 loss for the forfeiting team.
- e. If more than one team has the same number of points and same goal differential, the team that won their head-to-head game(s) will be higher in the official standings.
- f. If more than one team has the same number of points, same goal differential, and even results in their head-to-head game(s), the teams will be considered "tied" in the standings.

Section 13: Health and Safety

Any actions or behaviors that put at risk the safety and/or health of the players or other participants of IPL activities will receive penalties and/or disciplinary actions from MSA, which may include suspension or expulsion from IPL participation.