

U-8-to-Basic Referee Upgrade Course

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to train certified U-8 Officials in the basic skills required to serve as a Basic Referee in AYSO matches in accordance with AYSO (FIFA) Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations. The emphasis is on U-10 games. The course constitutes the training portion of the certification requirements for an AYSO Basic Referee for participants who are already certified as AYSO U-8 Officials. In addition to registration as a volunteer in the local program, those requirements are:

MINIMUM AGE:	12 years old
GAMES:	No minimum number of games required
TRAINING:	Complete the Basic Referee Course or, equivalently, be a U-8 Official and complete the U-8-to-Basic Referee Upgrade Course (this course).
TESTING:	75% or better on the Basic Referee Exam
ASSESSMENT:	Not required
FITNESS TEST:	Not required; an introduction to the AYSO Physical Fitness Test is recommended
SERVICE:	None required

For the most current certification requirements see the *National Referee Program Manual* on AYSOtraining.org.

This course consists of five lessons derived from the AYSO Basic Referee Course.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Certification as an AYSO U-8 Official is a prerequisite for participation in this course.

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the differences between U-8 and U-10 play in AYSO.
- Understand the basics of offside
- Use appropriate signals
- Have a basic understanding of fouls and misconduct (and free kicks)
- Have a cursory understanding of the fundamentals of play

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

- U-8-to-Basic Referee Upgrade Course Roster
- U-8-to-Basic Referee Upgrade Course Plan (this document)
- Course evaluation form (available on AYSO.org)

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- Handouts (for each student):
 - *Laws of the Game* (AYSO Edition, current year)
 - *AYSO Guidance for Referees and Coaches* (current year)

The materials above are required by the lesson plans of this course. Instructors may use additional relevant materials.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1:

U-8-to-Basic Referee Course – Presentation Slides – Dynamic.pdf

Attachment 2:

U-8-to-Basic Referee Course – Fundamental Coaching Concepts – Handouts.pdf

Attachment 3:

U-8-to-Basic Referee Course – Course Evaluation.pdf

INSTRUCTOR NOTES

Throughout this course, confirmation questions are included both to test the level of learning achieved by the students and, on occasion, to introduce nuances that are not presented elsewhere in the course. The instructor should ensure that these questions are not overlooked.

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COURSE OUTLINE

This is the overall plan for the course. The lessons must be presented in order as listed.

	Lesson	Page	Module(s)	Duration
I	Differences Between U-8 and U-10 Games	5	2-7, 11-12	45 min
II	Fouls and Misconduct – Basic	15	8	45 min
III	Offside - Basic	26	9	40 min
IV	Referee and Assistant Referee Mechanics	31	10	60 min
V	Fundamental Coaching Concepts	41	13	20 min
	Course Wrap-up	43		10 min
<i>TOTAL TIME (excluding breaks and Basic Referee Exam)</i>				<i>220 min (3hr 40min)</i>

Breaks of 10-15 minutes are recommended every 90-120 minutes. Note that time for the administration of the Basic Referee Exam is not included in this table.

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I. Differences Between U-8 and U-10 Games (Modules 2-7, 11-12)

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Duration: 45 minutes, 5 of which is general introduction (section F)
2. This lesson covers material from the following lessons of the Basic Referee Course, including only what was not covered in the U-8 Official Course:
 - a. The Game of Soccer
 - b. Understanding Younger Players
 - c. Pre-game and Post-game Duties
 - d. Starting the Game
 - e. Stopping the Game
 - f. Restarting the Game

B. GOALS

1. Introduce role of the assistant referee
2. Review key aspects of officiating for U-8 players
3. For the topics listed in section A.2 of this lesson, bring the U-8 Official's knowledge up to the level in the Basic Referee Course.

C. STUDENT MATERIALS

1. AYSO edition of *FIFA Laws of the Game*
2. *Guidance for Referees and Coaches*

D. INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. Overhead projector and screen or computer and projector
2. Flip chart, dry or chalk board with markers or chalk
3. U-6, U-8 and U-10 Coaching manuals (one copy of each for reference only)
4. Soccer balls, ideally sizes 3 and 4 (to demonstrate differences)

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

None.

F. INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce yourself and co-instructors, if any.
2. Welcome students to the U-8-to-Basic Referee Upgrade course.
3. Verify that all present are already certified as AYSO U-8 Officials, a prerequisite for this course.

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4. Explain what students will have achieved upon completion of the course. (See Course Description for certification requirements.)
5. Provide brief overview of schedule for the course, including planned breaks. Acquaint students with physical setting (rest rooms, refreshments if provided, etc.)
6. Review

Note to instructor: If the students have not recently attended the U-8 Official Course, you should conduct a brief review at this point. If, however, this course follows soon after U-8 Official training, the review can be reduced to a few “warm-up” questions or dispensed with entirely.

- a. Before beginning the review, ascertain what the students’ experience has been.
- b. If most students have been active as U-8 officials, the review can be relatively brief. Choose a few questions drawn from the U-8 Official Course plan, especially the confirmation questions at the end of the lessons.
- c. If few students have been active as U-8 Officials, the review should be more extensive. Use the confirmation questions from the lessons of the U-8 Official Course and be sure to confirm the students’ understanding of restarts.

G. UNDERSTANDING U-10 PLAYERS

1. **Note to instructor:** *The students are assumed to be familiar with the characteristics of U-8 players. The objective of this section is to introduce the differences. The following material is for your reference; do not present it literally. See note on item 2 below.*
 - a. Physical Characteristics
 - i. More interested in competitive activities
 - ii. More interested in improving skills – attention span increasing
 - iii. May still accept being touched but some will begin to reject it.
 - b. Social and Emotional Characteristics
 - i. Friendship and peer acceptance remain important – need to be liked.
 - ii. Still generally cooperative with adults and crave praise and attention
 - iii. More likely to blame others for their own mistakes or shortcomings.
 - c. Cognitive/Thought Development
 - i. Recall details with accuracy
 - ii. Understand the concept of cause and effect

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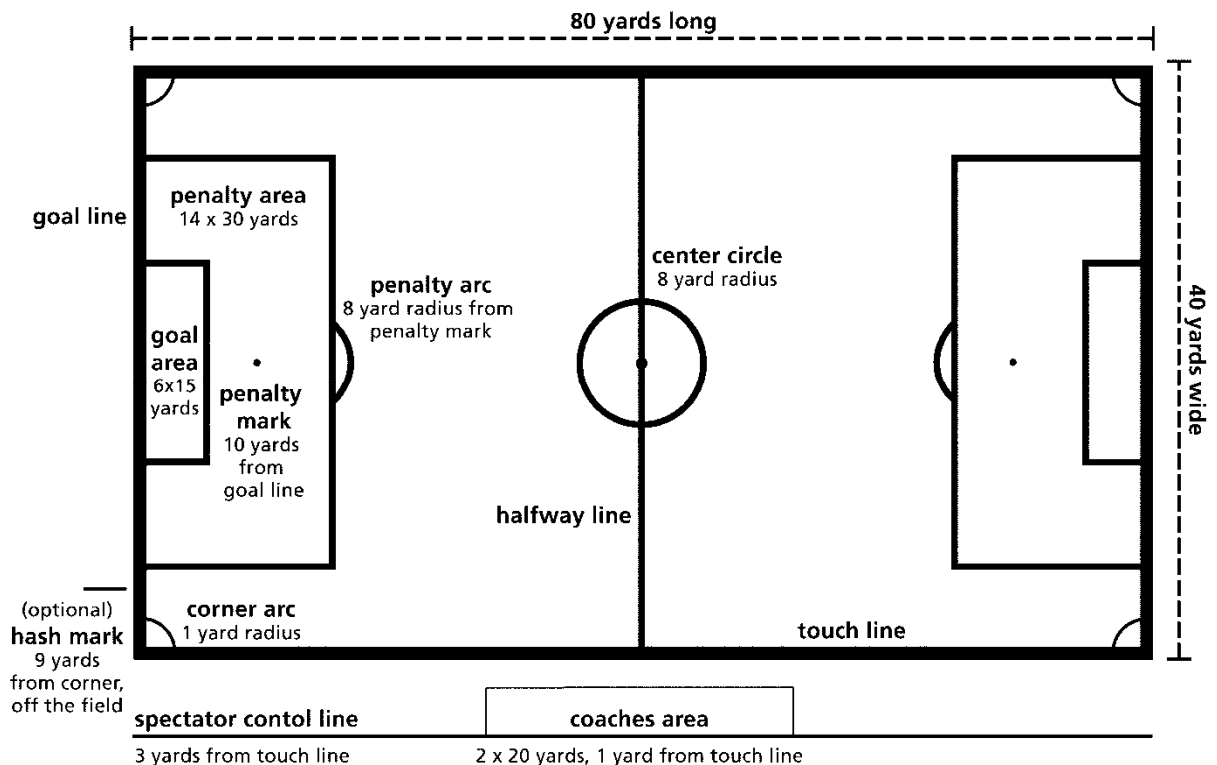
- iii. Enjoy attention but emotional response to stimulus is reduced
2. **Note to instructor:** *Using guided participation, get the students to ways in which U-10 and U-8 players differ. Use the preceding material (item 1) for your reference, and ensure the following points are made.*
- a. U-10's have increasing physical abilities and increasing desire for competition. Implication for referees: the U-10 game is longer than the U-8, and the players are somewhat more focused on play as an organized activity.
 - b. Teamwork has a more important role in the U-10 game. Implication for referees: cooperation within the officiating team becomes a visible standard for teamwork, even if it isn't something that the players consciously recognize at this level. As in the U-8 game, officials role-model behaviors that the players will instinctively emulate.

H. PRE-GAME AND POST-GAME DUTIES

1. Assistant referees are often used in U-10 games. They are dressed and equipped just as the referee is.
 - a. The assistant referee wears the same uniform as the referee to emphasize that they are on the same "team".
 - b. *Ask:* Why should the assistant referee carry a coin, pencils, watches, etc., just as the referee does? *Answers:*
 - i. To assist the referee in case he/she lacks any of these necessary items.
 - ii. To be prepared to take over in case the referee is unable to continue.
 - iii. To assist the referee if he/she assigns certain duties to the assistant referees, for example, keeping track of substitutions.
2. The referee should bring a set of flags for use by the assistant referees but, as with all other officiating equipment, the assistant referee should have his own, just in case.
3. The safety inspection of the field is conducted just as in U-8 matches.
 - a. The assistant referees help the referee to determine that the field is ready for play. In some cases, the referee may instruct the assistant referees to carry out the field inspection while he attends to other matters. In this case, the assistant referees should inform the referee of any irregularities they discover.
 - b. The U-10 field and goals are larger than for U-8, and there are additional markings whose adequacy must be verified.
 - c. Requirements of the U-10 field:
 - i. The recommended size of the field in U-10 games is 80 x 40 yards, with the following markings: boundary lines (goal lines and touch lines),

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halfway line, 8-yard radius center circle, 1-yard radius corner arcs, 6 x 15 yard goal areas, 14 x 30 yard penalty areas, a penalty mark 10 yards from each goal, and penalty arcs extending 8 yards from the penalty mark, as shown in the diagram below (taken from the *Guidance for Referees and Coaches*). Note that all the elements of a “regulation” field (that is, the field as described in Law 1 of the *Laws of the Game*) are present, but the U-10 field is about 20-25% smaller.



- ii. Goals in U-10 games are a maximum of 7 feet high and 7 yards wide. The referee must ensure that the goals are properly positioned (centered on the goal lines) and anchored securely to the ground.
 - iii. Corner flags are positioned on the lines at each corner of the field and must be at least 5 feet high with a non-pointed top.
4. The requirements for the ball are the same as in U-8, except that a larger ball – size 4 – is used in U-10 play.
 5. The requirements for the players’ equipment are the same as in U-8.
 6. In a U-10 game, 7 players are on the field for each team, rather than 5 in U-8.
 7. It is common for referees in U-10 games to ask the assistant referees to handle inspection of the teams. This implies that the assistant referees acquire the team lineup cards, ascertain which team members are present, and inspect their

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equipment. Jewelry, especially earrings, is increasingly common as the players get older. Assistant referees have the same duty as referees to enforce the Laws and protect players from injury.

8. At the conclusion of the game, the assistant referees join the referee on the field, again reinforcing visually that they are a team. The officials shake hands and monitor the post-game team handshake, then leave the field together after the game has concluded.
9. Review questions (including material from U-8 Official training):
 - a. *Ask:* During the safety inspection of the players, the referee notices that a player is wearing earrings. She explains that she had her ears pierced the previous day and if she removes the earrings the holes will close. What should the referee do? *Answer:* The referee should explain to the player that earrings are not permitted; if she wishes to play, she must remove them. The referee may choose to involve the coach. *Ask:* If she (or her coach) asks if the earrings may be covered with tape, what should the referee do? *Answer:* The referee should not permit the earrings to be taped. Tape does not eliminate the danger posed by wearing jewelry.
 - b. *Ask:* During the field inspection, the assistant referee notices that a goal is being held in place by two bricks placed on the back of the structure. What should he do? *Answer:* A few bricks resting on the goal structure are not sufficient to anchor it securely. The assistant referee should inform the referee of the problem, who in turn should inform the coaches that the goals need to be securely anchored before the match can start.
 - c. *Ask:* What size ball is specified for U-10 play? *Answer:* Size 4. *Ask:* Suppose that only a size 3 ball is available. What should the referee do? *Answer:* The game should be played, even though the ball is the wrong size. However, the referee must determine that the ball is otherwise safe (that is, properly inflated, no cuts, etc.).
 - d. *Ask:* What additional markings are present on U-10 fields that are absent from U-8 fields? *Answer:* Penalty area, penalty arc, and penalty mark.

I. STARTING THE GAME

1. It is customary for the assistant referees to join the referee for the coin toss. This visually reinforces the notion of an officiating team. However, there may be circumstances in which this is not possible. For example, if the field is in use for a previous game and the referee conducts the coin toss off the field, the assistant referees may be engaged in other duties (such as player inspection).
2. Once the teams are on the field and the referee is ready to start the game, he should make eye contact with the assistant referees to ensure that they are ready for play to begin.

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3. Each half of a U-10 game lasts 25 minutes, with a stoppage approximately 12½ minutes into each half for substitutions.
4. Review questions (including material from U-8 Official training):
 - a. *Ask:* Where should the players be on a kick-off? *Answer:* Each team should be in its own half of the field and the team that is not taking the kick off must be outside the center circle.
 - b. *Ask:* In a U-10 game, how many players should be on the field at a time? *Answer:* 7 for each team.
 - c. *Ask:* How are goalkeepers recognized? *Answer:* They must wear jerseys that distinguish them from the other players and officials.

J. STOPPING THE GAME

1. Assistant referees are frequently delegated the responsibility for keeping track of substitutions. They record substitutions on the team lineup card and verify that playing time for each team member is in accordance with the AYSO National Rules and Regulations.
2. Review questions (including material from U-8 Official training):
 - a. *Ask:* When may substitutions occur? *Answer:* Approximately midway through the first half, at half time, approximately midway of the second half, and for an injured player.
 - b. *Ask:* You are the assistant referee. As the second half is about to begin, you notice that one player who was present at the start of the game has not played at all, and is sitting at the side of the field. What should you do? *Answer:* Inform the referee, who should discuss the matter with the coach.
 - c. *Ask:* If the boundary line of the field is a rut in the grass and the ball gets caught in the rut as it rolls, is it in play? *Answer:* Yes.
 - d. *Ask:* If the injured player needs to leave the field, may a substitute replace him? *Answer:* Yes.
 - e. *Ask:* What is the minimum amount of time each team member must play? *Answer:* Half the game (two “quarters”).

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K. RESTARTING THE GAME

Note to instructor: In the Basic Referee Course, fouls and misconduct are introduced before restarts, which are then covered in full. In this course, students come in with a limited understanding of fouls and know the subset of restarts used in U-8 play. This lesson briefly covers direct and indirect free kicks and penalty kicks, thereby completing the students' knowledge of restarts at the level of the Basic Referee Course. Fouls are covered in Lesson II, after the students understand the different restarts that apply to fouls in U-10 and older play. *Do not get into a discussion of fouls here.*

1. U-8 Officials are already familiar with most of the restarts used in U-10 games. In particular, they already know about: kick-off, throw-in, goal kick, corner kick, free kick, and dropped ball. *Briefly confirm this knowledge.*
 - a. *Ask:* When is a throw-in awarded? *Answer:* When the ball leaves the field over the touch line. *Ask:* Who takes the throw-in? *Answer:* Any player on the team that did not touch the ball last.
 - b. *Ask:* When is a goal kick awarded? *Answer:* When the ball leaves the field over the goal line having last been touched by the attacking team, and a goal is not scored. *Ask:* Who takes the goal kick? *Answer:* Any player on the defending team.
 - c. *Ask:* When is a corner kick awarded? *Answer:* When the ball leaves the field over the goal line having last been touched by the defending team, and a goal is not scored. *Ask:* Who takes the corner kick? *Answer:* Any player on the attacking team.
 - d. *Ask:* When is a kick-off awarded? *Answer:* After a goal is scored. *Ask:* And when is a goal scored? *Answer:* When the ball leaves the field between the goal posts and beneath the cross-bar. *Ask:* Who takes the kick-off? *Answer:* The team against which the goal was scored.
 - e. *Ask:* When is a free kick awarded? *Answer:* When a foul has been committed. *Note to instructor:* *This is a complete enough answer for U-8 officials, since there are no technical infringements for which free kicks are awarded in U-8 play. The differences in U-10 play will be covered shortly.*
 - f. *Ask:* When is a dropped ball used? *Answer:* When the referee has stopped the game for any reason other than those we've just discussed. *Ask:* What's a common example? *Answer:* Injury.
2. In U-10 play, free kicks are differentiated as direct and indirect free kicks, and an additional restart – the penalty kick – is also used.

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3. Free kicks

- a. In U-8 play, all free kicks are *direct*, meaning that a goal is scored if the ball goes directly from the kick into the opposing team's goal.
- b. In U-10 and older play, there are two types of free kick: *direct* and *indirect*. They are used for different types of fouls. *Direct* means that a goal may be scored directly from the kick (against the opposing team). *Indirect* means that the ball must touch another player, on either team, before a goal can be scored.
- c. In most cases, the free kick is taken from the location of the foul, and the ball is in play as soon as it is kicked and moved. It does not have to be kicked forward. However, there are some conditions and special circumstances:
 - i. [U-10 and older] A free kick taken from anywhere within a team's own penalty area (including the goal area) is in play when it is kicked and leaves the penalty area.
 - ii. A free kick awarded to a team inside its goal area may be taken from any point in the goal area. This is the same as in U-8.
 - iii. An indirect free kick awarded to the attacking team inside its opponents' goal area is taken from the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. (This line is 6 yards from the goal line.)
 - iv. [U-10 and older] If a direct free kick is to be awarded to the attacking team inside the defending team's penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded instead. *The penalty kick is discussed later in this lesson.*
- d. If, from a direct free kick, the ball is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal is scored. If, from an indirect free kick, the ball is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded to the opponents.
- e. To signal an indirect free kick, the referee must raise one hand high before the kick is taken and keep it raised until the kick is taken and the ball touches another player or goes out of play. *Note to instructor: demonstrate this signal now.* Thus, if the ball goes into the goal and the referee's hand is still in the air, a goal is not scored. It's important for everyone – players and assistant referees – to know this!

4. Penalty kick

- a. A penalty kick is awarded when a direct free kick foul has been committed by a team within its own penalty area.
- b. A penalty kick is somewhat like a direct free kick taken from the penalty mark, and a goal is scored if a properly taken kick enters the goal.

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- c. After the kicker, who may be any player on the attacking team, is identified, he/she is handed the ball by the referee. The ball is placed on the penalty mark by the kicker. All other players except the defending goalkeeper must remain outside the penalty area and penalty arc, and behind the penalty mark, until the ball is in play. The goalkeeper must stand on the goal line between the goal posts.
 - d. When all players are properly positioned, the referee signals (blows the whistle) for the kick to proceed. The ball is in play when it is kicked by the designated kicker and moves forward. The goalkeeper must remain on the goal line (but can move side-to-side) until the ball is in play.
 - e. A penalty kick is an unfamiliar event for U-10 players. If the referee finds it necessary to award a penalty kick, he/she will need to guide the players through the process. It is also a potentially frightening event for a U-10 goalkeeper, and the referee should be prepared to say a consoling word to a goalkeeper who thinks (s)he let the team down by not stopping the goal.
5. There is one additional requirement for restarts in U-10 play that did not apply in U-8. For all restarts (including the new ones just described) except a dropped ball, the player who takes the restart must not touch the ball a second time before it touches another player (or goes out of play). If the player taking the restart touches the ball a second time, the referee stops play and gives an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the point of the infringement.
6. Review questions (including material from U-8 Official training):
- a. *Ask:* For a goal kick, must the ball be placed on a boundary line of the goal area? *Answer:* No, but young players almost always do so. The ball may be placed anywhere in the goal area.
 - b. *Ask:* During a corner kick, if the ball is kicked only slightly and doesn't leave the corner arc, is it in play? *Answer:* Yes, the ball is in play as soon as it is kicked and moved.
 - c. *Ask:* Why would a referee raise his hand after awarding a free kick? *Answer:* To indicate to the players that the kick is indirect.
 - d. *Ask:* If, from a goal kick in a U-10 game, the ball stops a yard short of the penalty area boundary, what should the referee do? *Answer:* Have the kick retaken because the ball has not been put into play. It must leave the penalty area to be in play.

L. CONCLUSION

1. This lesson has covered most of the differences between U-8 and U-10 play. (There is one more important difference – offside – that is the subject of Lesson III.)

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- a. These differences are mostly intuitive – bigger field, bigger goal, bigger ball, longer half. The U-10 field is marked the same as a professional field; the only difference is that it is smaller.
 - b. The Laws that govern starting, stopping, and restarting play are largely the same as for U-8, except for some restarts: two kinds of free kick, and the penalty kick.
2. The additional details can be initially confusing, though they quickly become familiar after a few games.
 3. Bridge to next lesson, perhaps as follows: “We’ve covered most of the differences between the U-8 game and older play. There are two additional areas of the Laws – the ones that referees spend most of their time discussing – that we still need to cover: fouls and offside. Those will be our next two lessons, beginning with fouls.”

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II. Fouls and Misconduct – Basic (Module 8)

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Duration: 45 minutes
2. This lesson introduces fouls and misconduct as they occur in the U-10 game.

B. GOALS

1. Explain the two categories of fouls.
2. Describe the fouls that occur in younger players' games.
3. Introduce the concept of misconduct and briefly explain how to deal with it in younger players' games.

C. STUDENT MATERIALS

1. AYSO edition of the *FIFA Laws of the Game*
2. *Guidance for Referees and Coaches*

D. INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. A ball.
2. Student volunteers to help with demonstrations of fouls and adult misbehavior.

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

None.

F. INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce yourself and co-instructors, if necessary.
2. Introduce the topic as follows. "The spirit of the game is fair play and good sportsmanship. If either of these is violated, the referee has the duty to stop play and penalize the offender. *Unfair or unsafe play* is categorized as *fouls*; *poor sportsmanship* is considered *misconduct*. Both are infrequent in younger players' games, but it is important that referees understand the most common fouls and be able to deal with them properly."

Note to instructor: *This lesson is very "meaty" and can be overwhelming for new referees. It is important that referees be introduced to the classification of fouls and misconduct used in Law 12, but the overall emphasis of the lesson should be on the fouls that referees will encounter in U-10 games.*

G. FOULS IN THE U-10 GAME

1. A **foul** is an unsafe or unfair act committed by a player on the field while the ball is in play.

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2. Acts that are considered fouls are specified in Law 12 and are classified in two groups: *Direct Free Kick* fouls and *Indirect Free Kick* fouls. The former are more serious and most involve unfair or unsafe contact with an opponent. The latter are less serious and generally do not involve contact with an opponent. The two categories are named for the way play is restarted after a foul has been whistled by the referee.

Note to instructor: This is an appropriate point to review the differences between direct and indirect kicks and to mention penalty kicks. This material was covered in Assistant Referee training, but the students may not have had much need to remember the details. If that training was not recent, a brief review is recommended before proceeding to the classification of fouls. Of course, if this material was covered as part of the course introduction, it need not be covered again.

3. We will briefly list the acts in each of these categories, but we will focus only on the few that occur frequently in the U-10 game.
 - a. There are 10 *Direct Free Kick* fouls.
 - i. A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following seven offenses in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:
 - (a) Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
 - (b) Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
 - (c) Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
 - (d) Jumps at an opponent
 - (e) Charges an opponent
 - (f) Pushes an opponent
 - (g) Tackles an opponent
 - ii. A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following three offenses:
 - (a) Holds an opponent
 - (b) Spits at an opponent
 - (c) Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
 - b. Younger players commit very few Direct Free Kick fouls, and the ones that they do commit are frequently the result of ignorance of the game or merely lack of skill. The following are the ones that most commonly occur in U-10 and younger age groups:

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- i. **Kicks an opponent.** This occurs most commonly when a player kicks at the ball and misses it, kicking an opponent instead.
- ii. **Trips an opponent.** This occurs most commonly when a player attempts to play the ball and misjudges the timing of his challenge, contacting the opponents' leg(s) and causing him to fall. Before whistling for tripping, the referee should be sure that it was committed by a player, since young players often trip over their own feet or the ball.
- iii. **Pushes an opponent.** Young players often push opponents to get to the ball or gain an advantage. Pushing is not allowed, even when players use something other than their hands.
- iv. **Holds an opponent.** Holding any part of an opponent may give a player an unfair advantage. It is illegal to hold with the hands or any part(s) of the body.
- v. **Charges an opponent.** "Charging" is a technical term in soccer. A fair charge is defined as a brief, staccato (momentary), shoulder-to-shoulder bump of limited force. Its purpose is to displace an opponent who has the ball enough to allow the charging player to gain control of the ball. A fair charge is permitted and should not be confused with a push. A reckless charge or an unnecessarily forceful one is a foul and should be penalized.
- vi. **Handles the ball deliberately.** If a player (other than the goalkeeper within his own penalty area) deliberately strikes, deflects, or holds the ball with the hands or arms (all the way to the shoulder), it is a foul. This occurs most commonly when a ball comes to a player above waist level and he doesn't have the ability or the confidence to play it with the body. (Sometimes the player will raise his arms over his head to stop a high ball.) The act of handling the ball includes any **deliberate** contact with the hand or arm, but **does not include accidental contact**. By contrast, if a ball strikes a player's hands or arms, the player has not committed a foul. In general, when younger players commit a deliberate handling offense, it is obvious to everyone on the field, including themselves. If the referee is in doubt about the deliberateness of the action, he should not stop play.

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Note to instructor: *It is easy for new referees to become caught up the details of what is or is not a foul, and no amount of discussion will make them comfortable with those details until they have some field experience. After covering the common cases above, consider giving them a couple of rules of thumb. For example: “if a player goes after an opponent rather than the ball, it’s probably a foul” and “nearly all contact other than brief, shoulder-to-shoulder contact with limited force is a foul” and “ball-to-hand is not a foul, while hand-to-ball may be a foul”. You should emphasize that these are rules of thumb, not precise definitions, but that they will serve beginning referees in young players’ games well until they get some game experience, at which time the specifics become more meaningful.*

- c. There are 7 *Indirect Free Kick* fouls.
- i. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following four offenses:
 - (a) Takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands, before releasing it from his possession.
 - (b) Touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player.
 - (c) Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate.
 - (d) Touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate.
 - ii. An indirect free kick is also award to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee,,:
 - (a) Plays in a dangerous manner.
 - (b) Impedes the progress of an opponent.
 - (c) Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands.
- d. An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits misconduct (to be discussed shortly) without also committing one of the 10 Direct Free Kick or 7 Indirect Free Kick fouls just listed.
- e. Of the Indirect Free Kick fouls, only a few occur frequently in younger players’ games:
- i. **Playing in a dangerous manner** (generally shortened to “dangerous play”). This is the most common foul seen in younger players’ games. Dangerous play involves playing the ball inappropriately and in so doing, preventing the opponent from playing it safely in the proper

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manner. Two forms occur frequently: (1) a player kicks at a ball above waist level in close proximity to an opponent, or (2) a player lying on the ground kicks at a ball in close proximity to a standing opponent. In both cases, the opponent cannot play the ball in the proper way without endangering himself or the player; thus, he has been unfairly disadvantaged by the player's action. Contact with the opponent is not required for play to be dangerous; indeed, if significant contact occurs, a Direct Free Kick foul has almost certainly occurred. *Note to instructor: Tell the students about Ken Aston's "gasp test": if the action of a player against an opponent makes you gasp, then feel relieved that there was no contact, it's dangerous play.*

- ii. **Goalkeeper takes more than six seconds to put the ball into play.** When the goalkeeper has the ball in his hands, opposing players cannot challenge for it. Obviously, this gives the goalkeeper an advantage, and the Laws are constructed to limit that advantage by restricting when the goalkeeper is allowed to use his hands and for how long. These limitations are appropriate for knowledgeable goalkeepers to prevent them from wasting time. However, young goalkeepers often need time to figure out what to do, and exceed the six-second limitation innocently. Referees should not immediately penalize this minor offense and should instead assist young goalkeepers with a few well-chosen words to get the ball back into play. Referees should not count the six seconds in a public way.

H. MISCONDUCT IN THE U-10 GAME

1. **Misconduct** is a term used in the *Laws of the Game* to cover behavior that is in serious conflict with the spirit of the game and good sportsmanship.
2. Acts that are considered misconduct are specified in Law 12 and are also classified in two groups: those for which a player is *Cautioned* and those for which a player is *Sent Off* (required to leave the field and prevented from further participation in the match).
3. We will briefly list the acts in each of these categories without elaboration, since misconduct is very rare in the U-10 game.
 - a. A player is *cautioned* and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:
 - i. Is guilty of unsporting behavior
 - ii. Shows dissent by word or action
 - iii. Persistently infringes the *Laws of the Game*
 - iv. Delays the restart of play

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- v. Fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick, or throw-in
 - vi. Enters or re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission
 - vii. Leaves the field of play without the referee's permission
- b. A player is *sent off* and shown the red card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:
- i. Is guilty of serious foul play
 - ii. Is guilty of violent conduct
 - iii. Spits at an opponent or any other person
 - iv. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
 - v. Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
 - vi. Uses offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures
 - vii. Receives a second caution in the same match
4. In older players' games, misconduct is punished formally as specified in Law 12 using yellow and red cards. Misconduct is rare in younger players' games, but if it occurs, referees should deal with it informally **without showing cards**. In fact, referees in U-10 and younger games should not carry cards. If a young player is behaving unacceptably, the referee may choose to involve the coach. In particular, if a player's behavior is uncontrolled (for example, he throws a tantrum and begins striking other players), he has no place on the soccer field and the referee should definitely involve the coach.
5. A player's enjoyment of soccer derives from the activity on the field. When adults interfere with the game, they reduce that enjoyment. The referee, as the guardian of fun, also has the responsibility to ensure that adults don't lessen the kids' fun. Managing younger players' games also entails helping the adults (coaches, spectators) to remember their role, which is to provide positive encouragement for both teams.
6. Coaches and spectators may be warned about negative behavior or even expelled from the vicinity of the field if poor behavior continues, but must not be shown a card.

I. DEALING WITH COACHES AND SPECTATORS

Note to instructor: *Recognize that the biggest worry/fear of entry-level referees is being yelled at by adults. Most are not confident of their ability to deal with*

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such situations. The purpose of this section is to give them a few concrete techniques for doing so. Inevitably, presentation of this material will bring their insecurities to the surface and can easily lead to a negative discussion that exaggerates the problem. The instructor must keep the presentation focused and limited in duration: 10-15 minutes. For the presentation to be effective it must include demonstration of the techniques; simply talking about them is inadequate.

1. Bridge from the previous topic by reiterating that misconduct among younger players is rare, but unfortunately less so among the adults accompanying them at the field.
2. Point out that, as the players get older (U-10 and above), some coaches and spectators may begin to become more “enthusiastically engaged” with the ultimate outcome (winning/losing) of the game. This increased enthusiasm, if left unchecked, can evolve to an emotional roller-coaster of inappropriate behavior. (The publication *Problems Outside the Touch Line* contains material on this subject. Mention it to the students, and consider distributing copies.)
3. Present 2-3 common scenarios illustrating inappropriate adult behavior and the action taken by the referee. Here are some suggested possibilities; if you use others, be sure to keep them simple, direct, and appropriate for U-10 games. Wherever possible, use a co-instructor or a volunteer to play the part of the spectator or coach while you play the referee. These scenarios work best when the participants speak naturally in the vein suggested by the dialog here; reading a script detracts from the effect.
 - a. **Scenario 1.** Five minutes into the game, the referee is close to play in the middle of the field when two opposing players bump into each other while trying to play the ball, there is no foul, but the Red player falls down. The referee makes no signal and does not stop play.

Red coach (shouting from the touch line): “Hey, what about that push?”

Referee looks directly at the coach, shakes his head indicating “No”, and puts a finger to his lips indicating “Shh!”.

The Red coach makes no further comment, although his body English indicates he’s not entirely happy.
 - b. *Ask: What do you think about the way the referee handled this? Lead a brief discussion, which should reach the conclusion that the referee did not let the disagreement pass unnoted, expressed his request to the coach unambiguously without having to stop play, and by doing this early in the match may have prevented subsequent escalation.*
 - c. **Scenario 2.** Two opposing players kick the ball essentially simultaneously and it crosses the touch line near midfield.

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Referee: “Red throw-in.”

Blue coach: “Aw, c’mon ref, that was ours!”

Referee: (evenly, looking directly at the coach) “Sir, please leave those decisions to me.” (turns to players)

Blue coach starts to respond: “But ref, ...”

Referee turns back toward the coach and says nothing, but puts his hands up in a gesture that says “No more!”, then moves away.

- d. *Ask*: What did you observe about the way the referee responded to the coach’s disagreement with his call? *Lead a brief discussion, which should reach the conclusion that the referee was calm, professional, cordial but firm, and avoided a protracted conversation.*
- e. **Scenario 3.** A parent repeatedly calls out instructions to his daughter every time the ball comes to her.

Parent: “C’mon Susie, pass to Rosie... (pause) OK, dribble, dribble, drib-pass! (pause) “You’ve got it! Now, big kick!” The ball now goes out of play.

Referee: (to players) “Hold the ball, please!” (walks over to the coach of Susie’s team, and loud enough for the parents to hear) “Sir, I’m sure you would prefer that your players do what you taught them in practice rather than what their parents yell. Please remind them that they can cheer all they want, but they aren’t to coach their kids during the game. Thank you.”

- f. *Ask*: What did you observe about the referee’s handling of the situation? *Lead a short discussion, which should reach the conclusion that the referee was professional, non-confrontational but firm, and supportive of the coach’s role.*
- g. **Scenario 4.** It is nearly the end of the first half. The referee has heard disagreement coming from the Blue spectators about his last three or four calls. The referee looks at his watch, then blows his whistle and announces “Half-time!” He then walks toward the Blue coach.

Referee (calmly, to Blue coach): “Coach, may I speak with you for a minute?”

Blue coach (to his team): “Players, get some water – I’ll be right with you.”
(to referee): “Yes?”

Referee: “I’ve noticed quite a bit of negative comment from your spectators. Would you please remind them that in AYSO we’re all here to make sure that the players have a good time, and they can do that by keeping their remarks positive and encouraging?”

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Blue coach: "Well, I..."

Referee: "Thank you. I know it will make a difference for the players, and I appreciate your help." (Referee returns to the field)

- h. *Ask: What did you observe about the referee's handling of the situation? Lead a short discussion, which should reach the conclusion that the referee was professional and invoked the principles of the AYSO Team.*
4. Summarizing the points resulting from the preceding discussion.
 - a. The referee should utilize the AYSO Team concept to enlist the cooperation of the coaches and spectators. Disagreement with officials that is tolerated at other levels of sport is not acceptable in AYSO.
 - b. The referee must remain calm and professional when the emotional reactions of coaches and spectators to the game and/or to the decisions of the referee begin to become inappropriate.
 - c. The referee should respond to inappropriate behavior early to prevent escalation. Sometimes this can be done without stopping the game. A smile, a wink, a look, a gesture: all are tools that can be used to convey a message without conversation.
5. Close the discussion by reiterating that the referee's job is to ensure the game is enjoyable for all who participate and observe. The players learn from the behavior of adults and the referee is the authority figure who determines what is and is not acceptable behavior. Remind the students that no referee enjoys this aspect of the job, but it is integral to the AYSO referee's fundamental responsibility to make the game enjoyable for the players.

J. CONCLUSION

1. Wrap up the lesson by returning to the subject of fouls. Some closing thoughts on calling fouls:
 - a. Beginning referees who do not have previous soccer experience are generally unsure about what actions constitute fouls, which is natural, and may mistake ordinary legal contact for a foul in an effort to "protect" the players.
 - b. Beginning referees with previous soccer experience tend to recognize fouls in the context of their experience, which is generally well above U-6/U-8/U-10 play, and they therefore tend to allow more contact than is appropriate at this level.
2. Review
 - a. Fouls are unsafe or unfair actions committed by players on the field while the ball is in play.

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- b. Although fouls are infrequent in the U-10 game, the referee must be able to recognize unsafe/unfair acts and stop play.
 - c. Fouls are classified as either Direct Free Kick fouls – the more serious ones that generally involve contact with an opponent – and Indirect Free Kick fouls – the less serious ones. They are named for the restarts used to get play underway after one has caused play to be stopped by the referee.
 - d. Misconduct is serious poor sportsmanship, but is rare in younger players' games. In older players' games it is punished formally, using yellow and red cards, but cards should never be used in younger players' games.
 - e. Inappropriate behavior by adults should be addressed early, with a calm and professional attitude and an emphasis on creating a positive environment for the players.
3. Confirm
- a. *Ask:* If two opposing players contact each other and one falls down, has a foul occurred? *Answer:* Possibly, but not necessarily. Soccer is a contact sport, but the contact must be fair and safe. Law 12 specifies the forms of illegal contact that must be penalized.
 - b. *Ask:* What kind of foul is pushing an opponent? *Answer:* A Direct Free Kick foul, because it involves unfair contact.
 - c. *Ask:* If a player pushes an opponent, but the push isn't too hard, does that make it an Indirect Free Kick foul? *Answer:* No, the action is either a Direct Free Kick foul or nothing. The referee must decide if the player committed the action carelessly, recklessly, or using excessive force. If so, it is a Direct Free Kick foul and should be punished. If not, then the contact is trifling or inconsequential, and play should continue.
 - d. *Ask:* A ball bounces up and hits a player in the arm. Is this a foul? *Answer:* No. The player did not handle the ball deliberately, which is the requirement for ball/hand contact to be a foul.
 - e. *Ask:* A player lies on the ground and kicks at the ball. No one else is near. Is this dangerous play? *Answer:* No. Playing the ball while lying on the ground is not a foul unless an opponent is near and trying to kick the ball.
 - f. *Ask:* If the referee thinks a foul may have occurred but isn't sure, should he stop play? *Answer:* No, the referee should not stop play for doubtful offenses.
 - g. *Ask:* A U-10 player deliberately punches (or, equivalently, spits at) an opponent. What should the referee do? *Answer:* The player is guilty of both a Direct Free Kick foul as well as misconduct (a sending-off offense). The referee should stop play, take the offender to his/her coach, and

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explain that players whose behavior is uncontrollable are not allowed to play. The referee should solicit the coach's cooperation in dealing with the player. Play should be restarted with a direct free kick.

4. Bridge to next lesson, perhaps as follows: "Now that we've discussed fouls and misconduct, you have almost all the knowledge of the *Laws of the Game* that you need to officiate a U-10 match. There is one more reason why play may be stopped: offside. That's the subject of our next lesson"

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III. Offside - Basic (Module 9)

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Duration: 40 minutes
2. This lesson introduces the notion of “offside” to new referees.

B. GOALS

1. Understand the basic components of offside position and offside infringement for referees and assistant referees
2. Cover the exceptions to offside (goal kick, corner kick, throw-in)
3. Explain and demonstrate the referee and assistant referee duties and signals for offside.
4. Explain how play is restarted following an offside infringement.

C. STUDENT MATERIALS

1. AYSO edition of the *FIFA Laws of the Game*
2. *Guidance for Referees and Coaches*

D. INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. If the lesson is conducted outdoors (highly recommended), use a ball and either half of a field or a suitable area with cones or other markers to identify the goal, halfway line, etc.
2. If the lesson is conducted indoors, use projected slides or a whiteboard to illustrate various arrangements of players and the ball.

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

None.

F. INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce yourself and your co-instructors, if necessary.
2. Introduce the topic. “The notion of offside is deeply rooted in the spirit of the game. In the early days of soccer, some players were lazy. Rather than work with the rest of their team to advance the ball in a systematic way, these players chose to hang around near their opponents’ goal, wait until the ball came to them, and then attempt to score a goal. Many of their team-mates thought that this was neither gentlemanly nor fair. Consequently, the rules evolved to say that a player who is ahead of the ball in the opponent’s half of the field, is “off his side” (*side* meaning team) and is not allowed to participate in the play while in that position. That notion, with small refinements that we will talk about shortly, is the essence of the present-day offside law.”

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Note to instructor: *Keep in mind that this is a **basic** offside lesson. The objective is to introduce students to the concept and its application at the U-10 level. AYSO referee training includes two additional lessons about offside at higher levels of play. **Resist the temptation to extend the material you cover into those more advanced lessons!***

G. OFFSIDE POSITION

1. Before an offside infringement is even possible, a player must be in an **offside position**. Without offside position, there can be no infringement.
2. What is offside position?
 - a. If the player is ahead of the ball, *and*
 - b. The player is in the opponents' half of the field, *and*
 - c. The player is closer to the opponents' goal line than either of the last two opponents, *then*
 - d. That player is in an **offside position**.
3. Being in an offside position, by itself, is not an infringement.
4. *Note to instructor: If the lesson is conducted indoors, use a whiteboard or flip chart or other visual aid to show a field diagram and various placements of players and the ball. For each arrangement, ask students to determine offside position. If the lesson is conducted outdoors, create the arrangements by physically positioning students (who simulate players) on the field.*

H. OFFSIDE INFRINGEMENT

1. An offside infringement occurs if a player in offside position *at the moment the ball touches or is played by a teammate* is, in the opinion of the referee, *involved in active play* by
 - a. Interfering with play, *or*
 - b. Interfering with an opponent, *or*
 - c. Gaining an advantage by being in that position.
2. The referee penalizes an offside infringement by stopping play and awarding an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the position where the infringing player was at the moment the ball was played by his teammate.
3. Exception: A player in an offside position who receives the ball directly from a goal kick, corner kick, or throw-in, is *not* penalized for offside. (That is, offside is momentarily suspended when the ball is being returned to play after leaving the field.)

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I. APPLYING THE OFFSIDE LAW

1. Application of the offside Law involves a *factual decision* and a *judgment*.
2. Whether a player is in an offside position at the moment the ball is played to him is a *factual decision*, in the same sense that deciding whether a ball has crossed a boundary line is a factual decision. (Indeed, the two decisions are similar, except of course that the offside “line” is not physically present on the field because it moves with play.)
3. Whether a player in offside position should be penalized for an offside infringement is a *judgment*, since it requires the referee to decide whether the player is involved in active play. Involvement can happen in many ways. The most common are:
 - a. Receiving the ball directly from a teammate, whether the ball was deliberately passed or miskicked. A direct pass from a teammate is probably the most common form of involvement in active play for U-10 players. However, an accidental pass can cause a player to be unintentionally involved, that is the play “comes to him” while he is in an offside position. Whether the pass is deliberate or accidental, if it is received by a player in offside position, he becomes involved in active play and is therefore offside.
 - b. Getting in the way of an opponent, for example, blocking the goalkeeper.
 - c. Preventing an opponent from playing the ball.
 - d. Talking to, yelling at, or otherwise distracting an opponent.
4. To make the *judgment* of active involvement correctly, the referee and assistant referee frequently must wait a few seconds after the moment at which the ball is touched or played by the teammate. *Note to instructor: illustrate each of the following scenarios for visual reinforcement, preferably by demonstration but otherwise on a flip chart or whiteboard.*
 - a. *Ask:* Should a player in offside position, not near any other players, be penalized for offside? *Answer:* Not unless he becomes involved in active play. Since he is not interfering with an opponent, he would have to interfere with play – for example by receiving the ball – or otherwise gain an advantage in order to be penalized.
 - b. *Ask:* When the ball is played by the teammate of a player in offside position, how long should the referee wait before penalizing the player for offside? *Answer:* The referee should wait until he determines the player is involved in active play. If the player is interfering with an opponent at that moment, offside can be whistled immediately. If the ball is going to the player in offside position, the referee should wait until it is evident that he can and will play it, at which point he has become involved in active play and an offside infringement has occurred.

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- c. *Ask*: Two teammates are advancing on the opponents' goal having beaten the opposing defenders so that only the opposing goalkeeper is ahead of them. One is slightly ahead of the other. The trailing player has possession of the ball, but is dribbling it by repeatedly kicking it a few yards ahead and running ahead to meet it. The teammate who is ahead of him has an equal opportunity to play the ball. What should the referee do? *Answer*: Allow play to continue until it is clear that the leading teammate's presence has affected the play; that is, until he has become involved in active play. *Note to instructor*: this situation happens often in younger players' games, where a teammate becomes a kind of "side car" or "wing man" for the player with the ball. Many inexperienced referees incorrectly whistle for offside when this player has not been involved. Refer back to the previous scenario (item b) and emphasize the possibilities: interfering with an opponent (when the players become sufficiently close to the goalkeeper) or interfering with play (receiving the ball).
5. A useful rule of thumb in judging involvement in active play is for the referee to ask himself "If the player in offside position had not been there, would the play have been any different?" If the answer is "no", then the player should not be judged guilty of offside. Like all rules of thumb, this one does not perfectly cover all situations, but it will serve the beginning referee well.
6. Offside in U-10 games is frequently blatant because the players are unfamiliar with the concept. The referee's role at this level of play is partly instructional. The referee should help the players (and coaches and parents) to get a feel for the offside concept and to learn how to identify and avoid it.

J. CONCLUSION

1. Review

- a. A player is in offside position when he is ahead of the ball *and* in the opponents' half of the field *and* closer to the opponents' goal line than either of the last two opponents.
- b. A player in offside position is penalized for offside if, at the moment the ball is touched or played by a teammate, he is involved in active play by interfering with play *or* interfering with an opponent *or* gaining an advantage by being in an offside position.
- c. A player is not offside if he receives the ball directly from a goal kick, corner kick, or throw-in.
- d. An offside infringement is penalized by an award of an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the place where the infringing player was when the ball was touched or played by his teammate.
- e. The judgment of active involvement in play may require the officials to wait a few seconds after the ball is touched by the teammate.

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2. *Summary:* A player is penalized for being at the wrong place at the wrong time doing the wrong thing:
 - a. The wrong place: in an offside position
 - b. The wrong time: at the moment the ball is touched or played by a teammate
 - c. The wrong thing: involved in active play
3. Confirm
 - a. *Ask:* Is it an offense to be in an offside position? *Answer:* No. It is only an offense to be involved in active play from an offside position.
 - b. *Ask:* When is offside position determined? *Answer:* At the moment that the ball is touched or played by a teammate.
 - c. *Ask:* A Red attacking player is near the top of the penalty arc at the opponents' end of the field. A Blue defender is a couple of yards closer to the goal, with only the goalkeeper behind him. The attacker begins running toward the goal and just before he reaches the defender, a Red teammate passes the ball toward him. By the time the Red attacker touches the ball, he is closer to the goal than the defender with only the goalkeeper in front of him. Should he be penalized for offside? *Answer:* No, because the attacker was not in an offside position at the moment the ball was played by his teammate.
 - d. *Ask:* Will the spectators understand this decision? *Answer:* In a U-10 match, many will not, and they may call out their disagreement with the referee's correct decision to allow play to continue. The referee may need to follow up with an explanation after the half has ended.
4. Bridge to next lesson, perhaps as follows: "We now understand the concept of offside and how it is applied. But how, exactly, does the referee convey to the players that he is stopping play for offside? More generally, how does the referee inform players of his decisions? And how does do the assistant referees provide information to the referee to help him make those decisions? This is the subject of our next lesson, which deals with the 'mechanics' that officials use to communicate with each other and with the players."

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IV. Referee and Assistant Referee Mechanics (Module 10)

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Duration: 60 minutes
2. This lesson introduces the basic concepts involved in referee and assistant referee mechanics including duties, positioning, and communication.

B. GOALS

1. Explain referee duties.
2. Introduce signaling by whistle, hand, and voice.
3. Introduce proper referee positioning
4. Explain assistant referee duties and signals.

C. STUDENT MATERIALS

1. AYSO edition of the *FIFA Laws of the Game*
2. *Guidance for Referees and Coaches*
3. *USSF Procedures for Referees, Assistant Referees, and Fourth Officials* (optional)

D. INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. If the lesson is presented indoors, either the accompanying diagrams of officials boxing play or a whiteboard or flip chart and suitable markers to illustrate positioning.
2. If the lesson is presented outdoors, a marked field on which positioning is illustrated using students as the officials and players.

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1:

U-8-to-Basic Referee Course – Referee and Assistant Referee Mechanics – Static.pdf

F. INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce yourself and your co-instructors, if necessary.
2. Introduce the topic. The referee is charged with many responsibilities that ensure the players have a fun, fair, safe game. These responsibilities may be shared with neutral assistant referees, who are trained to assist the referee, or with “club linesmen”, who are recruited from the fans of the “clubs” or teams. In this lesson we will take an overall look at the duties of the referee, neutral assistant referees, and “club linesmen”. We’ll also see how these officials carry out those duties by properly positioning themselves on the field to make judgments and signaling those judgments to each other and the players.

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Note to instructor: *This lesson covers a lot of material, since it introduces the main ideas in Laws 5 and 6, covers the basic ideas of referee positioning and communication, and explains signals used by both referee and assistant referee. Manage your time carefully!*

G. DUTIES OF THE REFEREE

1. The referee is appointed as the sole authority and decision-maker in a soccer match. The referee's role is to facilitate the game so players have a **fun, fair, safe** match. AYSO referees accomplish this goal by enforcing the *Laws of the Game* and using the Spirit of the Game to apply the Laws in an age-appropriate manner to create a positive environment. Two assistant referees are appointed to assist the referee to accomplish the goal.

*Emphasize the age-appropriateness of calls, and remind the students that the Spirit of the Game means that trifling or doubtful infringements are not to be called. Young players who lack the skill and knowledge of more experienced players should be given appropriate leeway. When they err in ways that technically violate the *Laws of the Game* but do not give them an unfair advantage, the referee should act as a teacher, not a disciplinarian.*

2. The source of the referee's authority in the match and a description of his responsibilities are found in Law 5. *Note to instructor: ask the students to look at the list of referee duties in the Laws of the Game. Tell the student that this lesson focuses on the duties that are most important in younger players' games. Preceding lessons have already implicitly touched on some of these duties.*
3. There is a single decision-maker on the field: the referee. The assistant referees, as their name implies, assist the referee. That is, they provide information to the referee, who makes the decisions.
4. The referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play are final. This means that the specific decisions of the referee about what did and did not happen during the match cannot be overridden later by anyone else. However, a referee who makes a mistake and realizes it before play has been restarted may correct it.

Ask: A referee stops play and signals for a free kick. Before the kick is taken, the referee realizes that he has awarded the kick to the wrong team. What should he do? *Answer:* Blow the whistle, stop the taking of the kick, and take responsibility for the error. "My mistake, it's Blue's kick, not Red's." Have the proper team take the kick and move on. Most people will respect a referee who admits an error like this and ensures that the fair thing happens.

5. The referee is required to keep a record of the match. There are several aspects of this duty.

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- a. The referee is the official scorekeeper and should record the jersey number of each player who scores a goal and the time at which the goal occurred. Often the assistant referees will keep a backup on the AYSO lineup cards.
- b. The referee is also the official timekeeper. Often one or both assistant referees are asked to keep time as a backup. *The following are some confirmation questions related to timekeeping.*
 - i. *Ask:* When does timekeeping begin at the start of the match? *Answer:* When the ball is kicked and moves forward. Not on the referee's signal.
 - ii. *Ask:* Does the clock stop when the ball goes out of play? *Answer:* No.
 - iii. *Ask:* In a U-10 match, for which the halves are specified as 25 minutes, the referee mistakenly allows the first half to run 27 minutes. What should he do? (a) Add two minutes to the second half to be fair. (b) Shorten the second half by two minutes to keep the overall game within the required time. (c) Admit his error to the coaches and conduct a 25-minute second half, noting the error in his post-game report. *Answer:* (c) is correct. Each half extends for the specified time, and the referee may not alter the second half in an attempt to compensate for an error in the first.
 - iv. *Ask:* When does the game end (that is, when does time expire)? *Answer:* When the players have enjoyed the full time in the second half to which they are entitled, plus any time added by the referee for time lost during the second half of play. The amount of added time is up to the referee to decide. In short, it's over when the referee says it is.
- c. The referee is required to file a written report after the match if there is a problem with the field or for poor behavior on the part of the coaches, players, or spectators.
- d. The referee controls substitutions. Substitution in AYSO matches follows the "Everyone Plays" philosophy. Every member of a team must play at least half of every game for which they show up on time and are prepared and able to play. "On time" means no later than the end of the first quarter. A player who shows up during the second or third "quarter" must play at least one "quarter". Substitution is allowed approximately midway through each half, at half-time, and if there is an injury.

During each half, the referee does not stop play at exactly the midway point but calls for substitutions when there is a convenient stoppage of play. Play is restarted based on the way it stopped (goal kick, corner kick, throw-in, etc.). If the ball fails to go out of play within about a minute of the midway point of the half, the referee stops play when the ball is near midfield, allows substitutions, and restarts with a dropped ball.

Goalkeepers may be substituted during any normal substitution opportunity. In addition, a player already on the field may switch places with the

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goalkeeper at any other time during the match. The change must take place during a stoppage in play; the referee must be informed before the change; and both players must be properly dressed for their new position before play is resumed.

6. The referee stops play for injury. According to the Law, the referee is directed to (1) stop play immediately if, in his opinion, the player is seriously injured and will require care off the field; or (2) allow play to continue until it a natural stoppage if, in his opinion, the injury is only slight.

Safety of players is a primary concern for AYSO participants. The *AYSO National Rules and Regulations* stress that the referee is to place “great emphasis on the welfare of the players.” Whenever a young player appears to be injured—whether it is serious or not—the referee should stop play immediately to check the player.

Ask: While playing the ball, a U-10 player twists his ankle and falls down, crying. The referee stops play. After the player has been attended to, how is play restarted? *Answer:* With a dropped ball. *Ask:* Where? *Answer:* Where the ball was when the referee stopped play, unless it was in a goal area, in which case it is moved out to the front edge of the goal area and dropped there.

7. The referee restarts the match after it has been stopped. Whenever play stops, the referee must determine the appropriate restart using his judgment and information from the assistant referees. *Note to instructor: The following are confirming questions that cover specifics from previous lessons. Cover them quickly.*

<i>In a U-10 game, how should play be restarted if...</i>	<i>Answer</i>
Ball over goal line (not into goal), last touched by defenders	Corner kick
Ball over goal line (not into goal), last touched by attackers	Goal kick
Following a proper goal	Kick-off
Ball over touch line	Throw-in
A family pet runs onto the field and interferes with play	Dropped ball
An offside infringement	Indirect free kick
A pushing offense at the halfway line	Direct free kick
A tripping offense by a defender in her own penalty area	Penalty kick

8. The referee suspends or terminates a match for cause. Occasionally a referee will need to “suspend” a match for some temporary situation such as dangerous playing conditions, severe weather, or disruptive spectators or coaches. The referee blows the whistle to stop play, explains the situation to both coaches,

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clears the field if necessary, and restarts play when the situation is resolved. In AYSO, coaches and referees work as allies to influence parents as well as players to use sporting behavior, as was discussed in Lesson I.

A match is “terminated” when it cannot be continued within a reasonable time, usually for safety issues. To terminate a match, the referee informs the coaches and players that the game is terminated. The referee notes the current score and playing time on the back of the lineup card, and reports the circumstances to the appropriate person, usually the regional commissioner or referee administrator.

Regarding severe weather, the *Guidance for Referees and Coaches* says:

“It is said that lightning can strike from a clear blue sky that is within a ten-mile radius of a storm. It is therefore strongly recommended that practices and games be terminated immediately upon hearing thunder or seeing lightning”.

“If you can see it – flee it; if you can hear it – clear it.”

H. REFEREE SIGNALS

1. The referee has three main tools at his disposal for communicating with the players: whistle, hand, and voice. Each has different strengths and weaknesses. *Note to instructor: lead a brief discussion of the properties of whistle, hand, and voice to elicit the following points*
 - a. Whistle: can be heard a long way; relatively little variation possible to express different meanings
 - b. Hand: can be seen even when noise prevents the referee from being heard; many meanings can be expressed (witness American football)
 - c. Voice: can't be used effectively over long distances, but can be used for more private communication (as with an individual player); many meanings can be expressed; less “official” than whistle or hand.
2. The Interpretations (Law 5) discuss the use of the whistle and emphasize that it is a communication devices whose effectiveness is reduced if it is overused. The Laws themselves don't mention the whistle at all; they merely specify a signal to restart play under certain circumstances, such as for a kick-off and a penalty kick. However, the whistle is the signal of choice for these occasions. The whistle is also used to stop play for an infringement, injury, or other cause. Referees can express the reason for the stoppage by varying the way they whistle. For example, a short “tweet” might say “go ahead and take the kick-off”, while a longer, more insistent one tells the players to stop for a tripping foul, and an strong, authoritative blast says “it's a penalty kick”.

Note to instructor: Demonstrate these variations in the whistle. Consider asking the students to close their eyes, then blow the whistle in a particular way (soft, or

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long, or stridently), and ask them what that sound communicates to them. If the lesson is conducted outdoors or in a gym, use a referee's whistle; otherwise, use an inexpensive toy whistle to limit the impact on the students' ears.

3. In soccer, hand signals are used not to explain what just happened, as in American football, but what is to happen next. Nearly always, a hand signal is used after play has stopped to indicate how it is to be restarted. *Note to instructor: have the students stand with sufficient space between them, then demonstrate the following signals and ask the students to mimic them. Correct errors as necessary.*
 - a. Throw-in: arm extended and raised 45 degrees above the horizontal in the direction that the team taking the throw-in is attacking. Hand should be open with fingers together.
 - b. Goal kick: arm extended as for a throw-in, but pointing 45 degrees below the horizontal and toward the goal area where the kick is to be taken.
 - c. Corner kick: arm extended as for a throw-in, raised 45 degrees and pointing toward the corner at which the kick is to be taken.
 - d. Direct free kick: arm extended and raised above the horizontal in the direction that the team taking the kick is attacking. This signal is very similar to the signal for a throw-in. The players understand the difference by context; in the former case the referee has stopped play for a foul, in the latter case, the ball has to cross a touch line.
 - e. Indirect free kick: same as the direct free kick signal, but followed by an arm raised vertically (hand open, fingers together) and held that way until the kick is taken and a second player has touched the ball or it has gone out of play.
 - f. Penalty kick: similar to the signal for a goal kick, but pointing at the penalty mark while running to it. Again, the difference between the goal kick and penalty kick signals is understood from context.
 - g. Kick-off: similar to the signal for a goal kick, but pointing at the center circle.
 - h. Dropped ball: there is no hand signal! Since the referee restarts play by dropping the ball, his action is a sufficient signal by itself.
4. These hand signals are universally recognized by players, although young players may not yet have learned them. Referees in younger players' games should generally use their voice to announce the restart while simultaneously giving the proper hand signal, thereby reinforcing the association in the players' minds. However, it is easy to get into the bad habit of using only the voice to convey the restart, something that referees should avoid. *Ask: Why? Answer: The voice doesn't carry all over the field, while all players can see a hand signal. Demonstrate a few signals with a combination of hand and voice.*

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5. Since the repertoire of hand signals and the expressiveness of the whistle are limited, referees use their voice in much communication with the players. Instructions, explanations, warnings about behavior, and the like all occur frequently in a game. Some referees are talkative, some terse. It's a matter of style, but it is important to be able to communicate effectively with the players.
6. Referees must also be able to communicate with assistant referees. This communication usually needs to be subtle, since it is not intended for others, and it occurs at a distance. This limits the referee to unobtrusive hand signals, and there is no specified set, although there are some common conventions. For example, the referee may need to communicate with a gesture, "Thank you, please put the flag down", which can be indicated with the hand open and horizontal, palm down, moving toward the ground like a "pat". The referee should discuss any non-standard signals he intends to use with his assistants during the pre-game conference.

I. REFEREE POSITIONING

Note to instructor: *The objectives of AYSO entry-level training with respect to referee positioning are very limited. The aim is a brief introduction to the most basic elements of the Diagonal System of Control, which receives a fuller treatment in the Intermediate Referee Course. Don't go beyond the material included here, or you will overwhelm beginning referees and exceed the time available for this lesson.*

Illustrate the following points using Attachment 1 or, if the location permits, use the students to represent players and assistant referees while the instructor represents the referee, and demonstrate the subsequent points. Use a standard (left) diagonal but do not discuss the motion of the referee along the diagonal: focus on the notion of boxing play as it moves around the field.

1. The key to making accurate calls is to have a good view of play. Together, the referee and the assistant referees position themselves to be able to observe as much as possible of what happens. There is a well-developed system for doing this, which is covered in more advanced referee courses, but we'll touch on the basic principles here.
2. The referee generally trails the play, keeping the ball and the action surrounding it between him and an assistant referee who is ahead of play.
3. When play reverses direction, the referee allows it to move past him, creating a new "box" with the other assistant referee, who is now ahead of the play.
4. The referee tries to stay 10-15 yards from play. That's close enough to see what's going on, and far enough to stay out of the immediate action around the ball.

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5. On restarts, the referee positions himself in the area where play will go next. For example, on a goal kick, the referee should be outside the penalty area in the vicinity of the players who are likely to “receive” the kick. For U-10 players, this will be fairly close to the penalty area boundary. For older players, the goal kick will go further and the referee should be positioned correspondingly further upfield. Similar considerations apply to other restarts.
6. Whenever the ball goes out of play, the referee looks at the assistant referee to see if he is signaling something. (What might those signals be? That’s the next topic!)

J. ASSISTANT REFEREE DUTIES AND SIGNALS

1. List the chief duties of (neutral) assistant referees:
 - a. Indicate ball out of play
 - b. Indicate which side gets a throw-in, goal kick, or corner kick
 - c. Indicate when an offside infringement has occurred
 - d. Indicate when a substitution is desired (in AYSO, this is rarely more than indicating when the specified time for the “quarter break” has arrived)
 - e. Assist the referee to control the game
2. Emphasize that the role of the assistant referee is to assist, not to insist. The assistant referee provides information, the referee makes the decision. So, assistant referees don’t “make calls”, they give advice. If the referee doesn’t take the advice, that’s his prerogative (and potentially his problem!) – the assistant has done his duty.
3. When club linesmen (that is, untrained assistants) are used, their duties are much more limited: they only indicate ball out of play.
4. Assistant referees communicate with the referee chiefly by use of the flag, and there are specific signals that cover most of the common cases.
5. **Note to instructor:** *demonstrate flag signals for each of the following situations. If possible, provide each student with a flag, have them stand sufficiently far away from each other for safety, and ask them to mimic your signals. Correct errors. Note that, except for “goal”, all these signals appear in the Interpretations portion of the Laws of the Game (Law 6). There is also descriptive information about each signal in this section of the Laws.*
 - a. Throw-in (and direction). Emphasize that the assistant referee must move the flag to the proper hand, not signal across his body.
 - b. Goal kick. Emphasize that the signal is horizontal and parallel to the goal line (or perpendicular to the touch line), not pointing toward the goal structure.

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- c. Corner kick. Emphasize the 45-degree downward angle with flag parallel to the touch line, regardless of the corner from which the kick is to be taken or the distance of the assistant referee from the corner flag.
 - d. Offside
 - i. Emphasize the two-part nature of the offside signal, with the second part being given *after* the referee's whistle.
 - ii. Demonstrate the three variants of the second part of the signal and re-emphasize that the signal is for the referee not the players. This means that the flag should be dropped once the referee has seen it.
 - iii. Briefly mention that, in order to judge offside position accurately, the assistant referee will need to be in line with the second-to-last defender. *Note to instructor: there isn't time to get into an explanation of assistant referee positioning. Since most offside in younger players' games is blatant, approximate positioning is generally good enough. A more complete treatment of this topic is reserved for the Intermediate Referee Course.*
 - e. Goal. Emphasize that the flag is to be held straight down while the assistant sprints toward the halfway line, maintaining eye contact with the referee. Once the referee signals the goal the assistant referee may stop moving upfield. The flag should be on the field side, visible to the referee. It is *not* to be held under the arm.
6. *If time permits, briefly demonstrate the following signals, but don't spend time having the students practice them.*
- a. Foul. This should be rare for U-10 play, so don't dwell on the details of direction – they are in the Law book.
 - b. Substitution. In AYSO, this is chiefly used when the AR needs to tell the referee during a stoppage that it is time for the substitution break.
 - c. "We need to talk." (flag horizontally across chest)

K. CONCLUSION

- 1. Review
 - a. This lesson has covered a lot of ground. It's important to summarize the most important things.
 - b. The referee's role is to ensure the players have a fun, fair, safe game. To that end, the Laws prescribe a number of referee duties. The referee is the authority in the game, charged with making decisions and communicating them to the players with his whistle, hand, and voice.

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- c. The assistant referees, as their name implies, assist the referee by providing another pair of eyes on the play and indicating by various flag signals when the ball is out of play, how play is to be restarted, and when certain infringements (notably offside) have occurred.
 - d. The referee and assistant referees position themselves to “box” play, so that there are four eyes watching what is happening in the active area of play.
 2. Confirm
 - a. *Ask:* Who determines when the half is over? *Answer:* The referee.
 - b. *Ask:* Who calls offside? *Answer:* Sort of a trick question! The referee makes all calls, including offside, but an offside decision is usually triggered by (informed by) a signal from an assistant referee. So the referee makes the call based on information from the assistant referee.
 - c. *Ask:* Is the referee generally behind play or ahead of it? *Answer:* Generally, the referee is behind play. The referee “boxes” play with the help of an assistant referee. The assistant is ahead at one corner of the box, the referee is behind play at the diagonally opposite corner. When play reverses direction, the referee is briefly ahead of play and usually allows it to pass him.
 - d. *Ask:* What method of communication by the referee is most effective to say to the players “Stop playing – I saw a foul”? *Answer:* The whistle, followed by an explanation (voice) once play has stopped, if necessary.
 - e. *Ask:* What is the assistant referee’s signal for a throw-in awarded to the attacking team? *Answer:* Using the positioning discussed in this lesson, the assistant faces the field and raises the flag 45 degrees above the diagonal in his right hand, parallel to the touch line.
 3. Bridge to next lesson, perhaps as follows: “We’ve covered a lot of material! We’ve been through all of the *Laws of the Game* (though not every detail) as well as the mechanics that the referee and assistant referees use as they officiate. But for all of this, we haven’t talked at all about what the players are actually doing during the game! That’s the subject of our final lesson.”

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V. Fundamental Coaching Concepts (Module 13)

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Duration: 20 minutes
2. Becoming a good referee involves more than simply learning the *Laws of the Game*. It is also important that referees know the game of soccer from the players and coaches perspective as well. This lesson reviews the fundamental concepts that coaches try to teach and players try to learn. Understanding these fundamental concepts will help the new referee develop their skill at reading the game and anticipating play, which will serve them well as their refereeing careers develop.

B. GOALS

1. Briefly explain Objectives of the Game and Principles of Play.
2. Introduce beginning referees to common soccer terminology.

C. STUDENT MATERIALS

1. AYSO edition of the *FIFA Laws of the Game*
2. *Guidance for Referees and Coaches*
3. U-8-to-Basic Referee Course - Fundamental Coaching Concepts – Handouts.pdf

D. INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

None

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

None.

F. INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce yourself and your co-instructors, if necessary.
2. Introduce the topic. "Becoming a good referee involves more than simply learning the *Laws of the Game*. It is also important that referees know the game of soccer from the players' and coaches' perspective as well. In this lesson we will cover the fundamental concepts that coaches try to teach and players try to learn. Understanding these fundamental concepts will help you develop your skill at reading the game and anticipating play."

G. OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME AND PRINCIPLES OF PLAY

1. Explain that throughout AYSO coach/player education, they are taught the Objectives of the Game and Principles of Play at varying levels of complexity as appropriate for the different age groups. As coaches and players increase their skill and ability to employ this knowledge, so should referees increase

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their understanding of the ever-increasing complexity with which these objectives and principles are employed by coaches and players.

2. The better the referee understands these concepts, the better the referee can anticipate or predict probable actions. Generally this is most useful to referees officiating older players' games. However, new referees should be introduced to these concepts, and in later referee training they will acquire more advanced elements. Referees who continue to improve their understanding of the application of objectives, principles and other tactics will keep pace with the increasing skills and knowledge of coaches and players over time.
3. Explain that the "Objectives of the Game" involve **what to do** and the "Principles of Play" involve **how to do it**.

Note to instructor: *Caution! This is not a coach training session. Resist the temptation to give the standard presentation for coaches. This is a limited introduction to the most high-level concepts surrounding play. Your objective is to establish the ideas that referees need understand these concepts and that they should spend time improving their understanding on their own. Only then can they truly be "Students of the Game". Encourage them to attend some coach training and even to volunteer to do some coaching.*

4. Distribute the student Handout for this lesson and briefly discuss the Objectives of the Game and Principles of Play. Use this discussion to whet the students' appetites and encourage them to learn more on their own time. Mention that every level of AYSO referee training provides increasing coverage of these topics.

H. COMMON SOCCER TERMINOLOGY

1. When referees know and use commonly accepted terminology about the game, they help players, coaches, and spectators to learn and use those terms as well. This ultimately improves understanding and communication for all involved. Consequently, it is important that new referees know the terms for things and actions that are part of young players' games.
2. Using the student Handout for this lesson, briefly review the common soccer terminology that beginning referees should know and use.

I. CONCLUSION

1. Encourage everyone to continue their education to become more familiar with coaching and the AYSO National Coaching Program. Suggest they become certified coaches and either coach or help to coach a few games. If you "walk a mile in a coach's shoes", it will make you a better referee.
2. Bridge to course wrap-up.

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COURSE WRAP-UP

1. The students have now completed the U-8-to-Basic Referee Course. If the written Basic Referee Exam is to be administered immediately following, it is advisable first to take a break, and then to conduct a short question-and-answer session. Use the Review/Confirmation sections of the lessons of this course and the U-8 Official Course to emphasize major points. Instructors are also strongly encouraged to review the material related to administration of written exams in the *AYSO National Referee Program Manual*. A properly conducted written exam will be a positive experience for the students and give them confidence that they have acquired the knowledge necessary to referee their first game.
2. When the written exam is administered, it should be corrected immediately and any misunderstandings discussed. Students may grade their own papers.
3. After the exam is completed, distribute Regional Referee badges. After the exam is completed, if any students need to retake the exam, make the necessary arrangements. AYSO's policy on retesting is in the *AYSO National Referee Program Manual*.
4. Ensure that the course roster has been completed.
5. Distribute course evaluation forms (Attachment 3).
6. Be sure to thank the students for the time they have put into this course and, in advance, for the time they will put in as AYSO referees. Close by reminding them that we never stop learning and that you look forward to seeing them in the AYSO Intermediate Referee Course as soon as they are ready to learn more.
7. Remind the students that they are part of a wonderful organization and to remember our motto that:

In AYSO, it's about MORE than the game!