



Coach Information Session
Outdoor Mini Soccer 2022
U4 & U5 Soccer Program

Table of Contents

- Overview of program
- What is mini soccer
- Philosophy
- Team Rosters/Game Schedules
- Team Equipment
- Tournaments

Overview of program

Volunteer coaches - Thank you!!

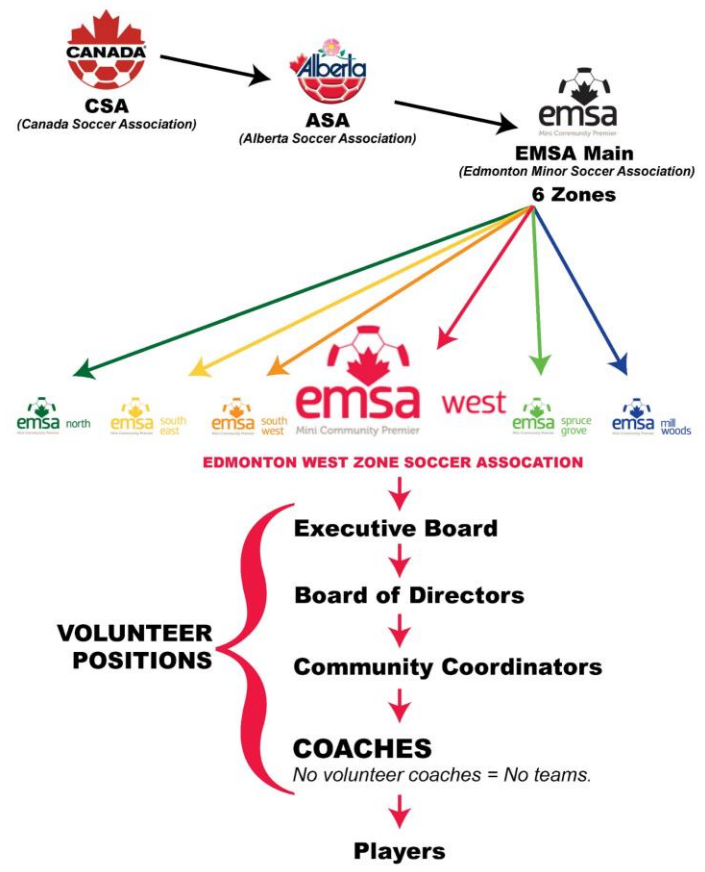
Community coordinators (Recruit coaches, distribute team equipment, help resolve team issues)

Staff - Vanessa (Exec Director) Rosa (Finance) Kelly (PIC's)

EMSA West Volunteer Board - Set priorities for West Zone, manage finances and planning.

EMSA West Zone Club is West Warriors (U9 and up)

Edmonton Minor Soccer Association - Parent organization (ASA, CSA)



What is mini Soccer?

- **Mini soccer** includes activities and games designed to improve our young players appreciation for the game of soccer. We want them to have fun!! Playing fun games, focusing on developing basic movement skills such as running, jumping, landing, skipping, kicking, throwing and catching – in a fun setting built around informal play and positive reinforcement is key.



Philosophy
EMSA West
philosophy
towards mini
soccer is
twofold.

1) Fun

- The area of focus of this age group is to make the experience of playing soccer fun. We want to make this a positive experience and encourage children and parents to return to soccer in future seasons.

2) Skill development

- The second area of focus is on individual athletic and skill development.

Team Rosters/ Game Schedules/ Team communication format



- Teams play once or twice a week from the beginning of May to end of June - weather permitting.
- Players must be registered with an EMSA team to participate in games or practices.
- When and how do coaches access schedules and rosters – notification by email from office/coordinators.

Who provides team equipment?

- T shirts - Coordinators pick them up from the zone office and give to coach
- Balls - Coordinators will pick them up from the zone, and contact the coach
- Discs, pug nets provided by community coordinator.



Tournaments

EMSA U5 Minifest

When

- Saturday June 18 (rainout June 19) (2017 2018 birth years)

Location:

- EMSA Charpentier West Complex 10059 – 231 Street

Cost \$20 per team

- (Face painting, 20 minute soccer game, bouncers, medals,

Registration deadline June 3, 2022

- Registration at EMSAmain.com/seasoninfo/outdoorseason/outdoor/U5-mini-fest) Games between 10 -3



What to expect from U4/U5 players

Coaching pre-school children is a lot of fun! Their enthusiasm knows no bounds. They will turn up in the most severe weather conditions (assuming their parents get them there) and smile all the time!

Self Centered Play

- No matter how much you “practice” it, they will not pass the soccer ball.
- Twenty seconds after the start of a game, every player will be within 5 yards of the ball – “The swarm”
- Players will slap at the ball with their hands or pick it up. Remind them use their feet.

Tears

- Most will cry immediately when they get hurt. Have them get a drink of water (which will be the cure for most tears at this age)
- Tiredness and frustration manifests in tears at this age. Parents should be on hand to assist and comfort their child.

Low Independence

- Invite parents of children reluctant to participate in activities to join in the activities and hold their child’s hand.

What to expect from U4/U5 players

Cont'd

Total commitment to whatever it is they are doing at the moment

- They will go flat out and then crash

Physical Limitations

- Skeletal system is growing rapidly which can result in apparent lack of coordination.
- Cardiovascular and temperature regulation system is not completely developed. They can overheat quickly. Make sure that they get adequate water breaks.

Entertainment

- They will say or do something that is very funny. Make sure you laugh.

The Coach

Soccer coaches wear many different hats when training young players. Leading fun activities, reining in a distracted player, dealing with tears all require flexibility. Your personality and enthusiasm will have the biggest impact on your players. Make sure the experience is lots of fun for all your players so they will want to come back the next time.

EMSA West Community soccer is built on volunteers.

Thank you for stepping into this role!!



Coach/Volunteer Code of Conduct

You are an ambassador for Edmonton Minor Soccer Association (EMSA), your Zone (EWZSA/EMSA West) and your community.

- Always carry yourself with respect, dignity and pride.
- Demonstrate a commitment to your chosen role.
- Act in accordance with the all EMSA bylaws, regulations and policies.
- To respect and honor the EMSA Code of Conduct
- Respect the authority and dignity of ALL EMSA game officials including game referees, Board of Directors, staff and other volunteers
- Be accountable for all team-related activities including proper registration of all players.

Coaches Code

- Soccer is a game for happiness.
- The laws of soccer should be regarded as mutual agreements, the spirit or letter of which no one should try to avoid or break.
- Visiting teams and spectators are honored guests.
- No advantages except those of superior skill should be sought.
- Official and opponents should be treated and regarded as honest in intention.
- Official decision should be accepted without looking angry no matter how unfair they may seem.
- Winning is desirable, but winning at any cost defeats the purpose of the game.
- Losing can be a triumph when the team has given its best.
- The ideal is the greatest good to the greatest number



Resources for the Coach

- Training Sessions (EMSA West, EMSA, New coaches will have a one-year grace period to take a course to be certified for U5, U7 & U9. Additional information on the website regarding courses.
- Additional information on the website regarding courses.
- <https://albertasoccer.com/player/grassroots/grassroots-guides/>

emsawest.com

→ SEASON INFO

INFORMATION

INDOOR SOCCER

→ COACHES' CORNER

POLICE INFORMATION
CHECK

INDOOR

OUTDOOR

COACH FAGS

TRIALISTS

SCORING GAMES

RAIN-OUT PROCEDURE

COACHES CARDS

→ COACH'S TOOL KIT

OUT OF TOWN PLAY

The West Zone website has lots of information for your reference.

- Drill Diagrams
- Lesson Plans
- Copy of this PowerPoint

CANADA SOCCER PATHWAY COACH TOOLKITS

1. Stage One – Active Start
2. Stage Two – Fundamentals
3. Stage Three – Learning to Train

Tips for successful coaching

1. Be prepared when players arrive – have your lesson plan and name tags ready.
2. Be welcoming, enthusiastic, and remember to smile.
3. Keep explanations simple – short and clear with as few steps as possible
4. Use your player's names.
5. Be inclusive, involve all players.
6. If a player is shy or reluctant to participate, ask the parent to hold their hand and do the activities with them.



Tips for successful coaching – Cont'd

1. Use encouragement and praise (rather than negative words)
2. Reward positive behavior with positive attention
3. Have a plan with backup activities in case things move along quickly (or an activity does not work out).
4. Avoid lineups to keep their interest.
5. Alternate game, activity, game



Communicate with the parents

Meet with the parents before the first game.

- Outline objectives of mini soccer. (Development of an athlete starts with physical literacy and their ability to run, skip and jump. The first 30 minutes of each game consists of skills and drills to build on physical literacy. These are key components to focus on and help teach utilizing the soccer ball in many activities.) This is followed by small sided soccer games 3 v 3 in a modified area.
- Get parents on your side. Be positive but understand that you are the coach.
- Make sure parents understand what you are trying to accomplish and how you will be going about it.
- Method of communication you will use with your team – email? What’s app? Team Snap, etc.
- A parent or guardian must attend the games – this is not a drop off activity.
- As a coach, you will deal with minor incidents such as not listening, minor aggressive behavior, and any infractions on the field. However, there are times when a child is not self-regulating. You may ask the parent to remove the child from the field until they are calm. Welcome the child back when they are ready.



Communicate with the parents – Con't

- Stress how important it is for their child to have their own water bottle (labelled) and go to the bathroom before soccer.
- Ask parents to arrive a few minutes early for the game/activities.
- Parents are encouraged to clap and cheer.
- Get parent volunteers to help you. They can keep kids organized on the sidelines (or blanket if you are using one). They can make sure that everyone gets in the rotation when the players are substituted. They can tie shoelaces, wipe noses, and make sure the children use the correct water bottle.
- Parents make sure children are dressed for the weather. (sunscreen, mosquito repellent)
- If children are ill, please have them stay home.



Player equipment



- Shirt, shorts, socks
- Shin guards mandatory (for safety)
- Flat soled running shoe or cleats
- No hard casts or splints (soft braces for knee, ankle, wrist are permitted)
- No jewelry or piercings (for safety)
- Long hair should be tied back

Behavior

- Parents, players and team officials must behave in a respectful manner. EMSA has zero tolerance for any form of harassment, bullying, discrimination or intimidation.



Give respect Get respect

Structuring a Practice or game

Successful coaching begins with planning. The better planned you are, the better experience everyone involved will have.



Organization

- Learn the names of all children on the roster – help the children learn each other's names too
- Have at least one ball per child
- Be organized and prepare for when children arrive (cones set up, ready to go)
- Get parents to help out and be responsible for the children on the sidelines.
- For game situation: have a blanket where all the children sit while awaiting their turn to go on the field.



WORKOUTS FOR KIDS



1 Walk on the spot.

Routine

- Create a routine that you follow when starting practice or games. Children pick up on this quickly and it will be easier to organize them when they recognize the start up activity.
- Start simple, practice the routine, and then add to it. It is easier to add levels of complexity to an existing activity than to introduce new activities from scratch.

2 Turn your toes.



4 Stretch.



5 Tap your legs.

6 Tap your fists.

7 Thumbs to the left.



8 Thumbs to the right.



9 Roll your arms.

Attention

- They cannot learn from you if they are not paying attention.
- Create some kind of signal that indicates you need the children's attention and use it only to indicate that (count to three, clap in a pattern, etc)
- Make eye contact with them and give instructions when they are paying attention.



Cultivate Desirable Behavior



- Reward desired behavior with positive attention (I will call on children who are quite and have their hand up)
- Be fair
- If an undesirable behavior is minor, or designed to get your attention: ignore it.
- Deal with inappropriate behavior immediately: sitting a child out (minutes equivalent to age, or until they are calm. Poor sportsmanship, name-calling, hitting, etc fall into this category.
- Keep the children occupied – down time gives undesirable behavior time to spawn.



Instructions

- Keep them short and clear. Demonstrate the activity.
- Have as few steps as possible. If you want the children to execute a multi-step procedure, build to it over a few activities or sessions
- Involve them in the process by asking leading questions
- They will learn best by “doing”



Activities

- Alternate simple drills with “fun” games that build on those skills. Skill drills often have a lower element of fun, but can be reinforced after initial instruction with games. At this age, skill drills need to be extremely short or made into something fun.
- Avoid drills or activities that have an elimination element or leaves children standing in line waiting. Standing around means they are not learning and boredom leads to behavior problems.
- Keep activities short or change parameters often. Switch children around, add elements)
- Demonstrate correct techniques. Avoid fossilization of errors (eg kicking).

Coaching Team Strategy or Positional Play at U4 & U5

“The Swarm”

- This is the hallmark of mini-soccer: a horde of children chasing the ball around the field.
- This. Is. OK.
- Children very quickly understand that the goal is to get the ball. They have a harder time understanding that moving into space and not having the ball is also important.
- Adults see the bunch of players as unorganized – not as a team. That’s the first problem, because, at this point, it’s really not a team.
- To parents, this is a mess on the field. They want the kids to spread out – so that the one player with any skill have the space to dribble around everyone else like cones.
- A good coach will definitely have to adjust these players’ instincts, as they get older, but surprisingly not much. The game itself makes them smarter as they continue to play more and more.
- Another reason why “bunching up” is ok for young players – the kid in the center of that bunch is learning early no how to play in tight spaces and not be afraid of traffic or contact. Allow this to happen. Watch what the children naturally do – some will attack aggressively, others will be more protective of their own goal.

Beginnings of Positional Play

The only real “position” at this age group is goalie. Let them all have a chance to try.

As the coach, it is your job to cultivate their strengths – watch them, where they naturally go and help them understand what they are doing.

To help them to understand where to go:

- Get on the field with them (in a game-play practice or game) and tell them or physically move them.
- Small sided-drills and games (caution – they will have difficulty applying principles learned in one situation to another).

Allow them to figure out the basics of the game and slowly add strategy or complexity over time.



Skills Focus

At this age, focus on the basic skills first. Build complexity over time, after they have competently acquired prerequisite skills.

Here is a selection of games and drills. Lesson plans and explanations will be emailed to you.

The Internet is a wealth of information with regards to drills and games. Spend some time researching activities if you feel your practices are getting stale.





Warmups

These are not-necessarily ball or even soccer focused – they should be fun and get all kids moving and in a positive frame of mind.

- Frozen Tag (have players moving in a variety of ways, ex. skipping, or galloping)
- Stretches (gentle, basic stretches)

Basic touch (ball control) and dribbling

- Taps, roll overs, pull backs and forward
- Pirates
- Shark attack
- Bum Balls
- Explode
- Red-light, Green light
- What time is it Mr. wolf
- British Bulldog
- Clean-up
- Dribble through the gate
- Relay races



Drill Ideas

Passing

- Mosquito
- Partner passing
- Group of three passing (timed)
- 5 v 1 (circle keep-away)

Shooting

- Mosquito
- Dribble and shoot
- Hit the cone



Sample One-Hour Practice Plan



Giving the children frequent water breaks will also give them a “mental break.” This will also give you a chance to set up your next activity.

START 1 min

Collect players at an identifiable and routine location (ex. stand on the BLUE cones).

WARM-UP GAME 3-5 mins

Example: Freeze-Tag

- Have players skip or gallop while moving around the defined area.
- Rotate “IT(s)” every 30 seconds- 1 minute.

STRETCH 2-3 mins

Have players stand in a circle, and lead them in gentle stretches and movements.
(ex: touch toes, calf stretch, quad stretch, hamstring stretch, hip circles, arm circles)

BALL INTRODUCTION 1 min

(Ball bag has been closed up until this point for your own sanity)
Have players sit/ line up and hand out balls to them one by one.

SKILLS & DRILLS 20-25 min approx.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| ▪ Bum Ball | 5 mins |
| ▪ Pirates | 5-10 mins |
| ▪ Shark Attack | 5 mins |
| ▪ Red-Light, Green-Light | 5 mins |

BREAK 5 mins

- Clear the field of play. Clean up balls, cones, etc.
- Organize game

MINI GAME 30 mins

See “EWZSA Modified Laws for U7” for rules and set up

Game day

- Coaches arrive at least 15 minutes early to set up the activities and organize your equipment.
- Welcome your players and put name tags on them. Masking tape is fine. Be enthusiastic. Smile!!
- The first **30 minutes** of activities should be designed around **skills and drills** - small sided games and activities suggested in this handout and at the on field session.
- They are fun and will motivate your players more than any other activity. They should involve small groups playing in small areas (no lineups). Provide players with the best chance to practice individual skills. Provide lots of positive reinforcement.
- Email with Practice plan and diagrams will be sent to all coaches.



General movement activities include

- Agility - running, changing directions, speeding up/slowing down, and stopping
- Balance - hopping, jumping and landing
- Coordination - combining different movements, moving with the ball, falling and getting up safely



The next 30 minutes follow the modified laws of the game for U4 and U5 handout.

- 3 v 3 with no goalie.
- Player changes should be every 2 to 3 minutes. (Blow a whistle for both teams to change players).
- Players take turns in all the positions. (Goalie gloves are not used)
- Coaches are on the field assisting their team.
- The assistant coach can be on the “players bench” which is typically a blanket where all those waiting to play are kept ready to go onto the field for the next shift.
- Field dimensions are reduced and rules of the game are limited to enable the players to continue to focus their attention on developing movement patterns rather than game tactics.
- There are no referees at this age

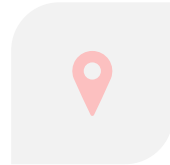
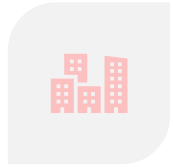
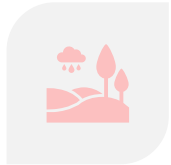


No stats are kept.

- Mini soccer is NOT a place to form rep-like teams.
- It is not a place where discouragement takes place due to a player not participating in the games because they are not good enough. Winning is not a goal.



RAIN OUT/INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURE



UNLESS THE FIELDS ARE OFFICIALLY CLOSED THROUGH THE RAIN OUT LINES, REGARDLESS OF CURRENT OR PENDING INCLEMENT WEATHER, TEAMS ARE ASKED TO REPORT TO THEIR FIELD TO PLAY.

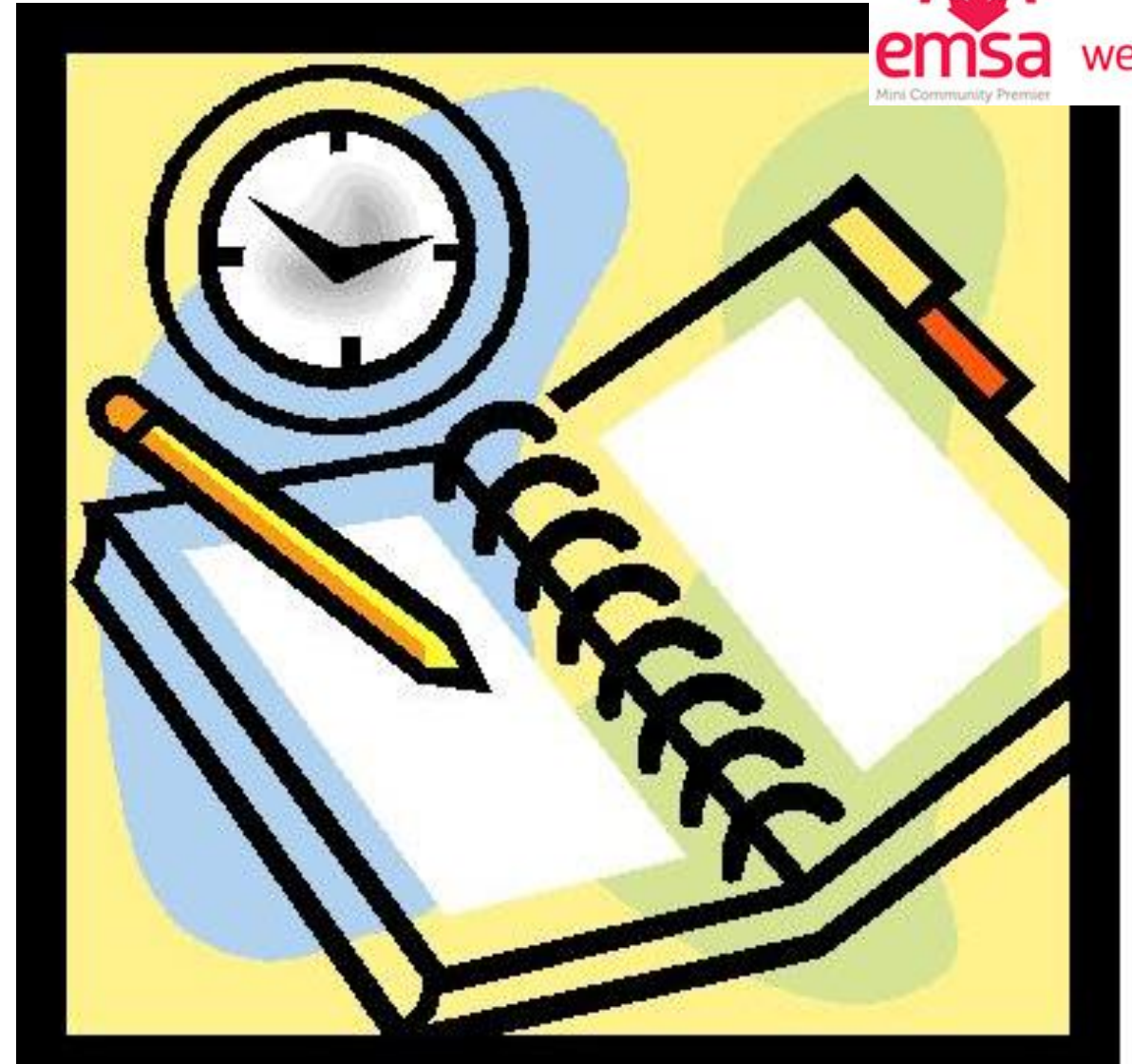
CITY OF EDMONTON
RAIN OUT LINE: 496-4999 EXT. 1

[EDMONTON FIELD CLOSURE WEBSITE](https://coewebapp.s.edmonton.ca/facilitynotifications/default.aspx?argS=4,13)
[HTTPS://COEWEBAPP S.EDMONTON.CA/FA CILITYNOTIFICATIONS /DEFAULT.ASPX?ARG S=4,13](https://coewebapp.s.edmonton.ca/facilitynotifications/default.aspx?argS=4,13)



RAIN OUT & AIR QUALITY RESCHEDULING PROCEDURE

- When a game is rained out due to the City of Edmonton (or out of town rain out line) closing the fields, or the coaches called the game due to inclement weather/air quality, it will be up to the coaches to reschedule the game between themselves.





RESCHEDULED GAMES

If a regular game conflicts with a **SOCCER TOURNAMENT, SCHOOL FUNCTION** the game **may be rescheduled**.

***NOTE:** Once the schedule is released teams will have a deadline of 24 hours after their first game on the current round/schedule to notify the EWZSA Scheduler by email at stats101@shaw.ca of the intent to reschedule any games for that current round. Once past the deadline there will be no reschedules allowed.

- **Steps for Rescheduling a Game:**

1. If you are the team who is requesting the reschedule, you must send an email to the EWZSA Scheduler, stats101@shaw.ca, indicating the game details and reasoning for the reschedule request.
2. BOTH teams involved will then receive an email from the scheduler indicating that permission has been given to reschedule the game. If you don't receive that permission email it means the game has not been given the go ahead to be rescheduled and will remain as originally scheduled.
3. The TEAM WHO REQUESTED THE RESCHEDULE contacts the opposing coach to come up with an agreed upon rescheduled date. The opposing team officials have 48 hours to respond and work out a new date. If the new date is not worked out within 48 hours then the scheduler reserves the right to automatically reschedule the game to a date chosen by the scheduler.
4. Once a date has been agreed upon, the TEAM WHO REQUESTED THE RESCHEDULE is responsible for emailing the EWZSA Scheduler to notify of the new date and time. The scheduler will then assign a field.
5. The scheduler will update the website with the rescheduled game details and the Portal will automatically generate an email to both teams and the Referee Assignor. The rescheduled game is not considered legal until that time.



Coaches Cannot Agree on Reschedule Date/Time

If the opposing coach and you cannot agree on a reschedule date, please notify the EWZSA Scheduler and he/she will step in and take over the rescheduling process. Please note that you must give the scheduler enough notice to be able to help you with the rescheduled game. If you send notice a day or two before the rescheduling deadline, then we will be unable to help you.

*Once the game has been confirmed by the EWZSA Scheduler, if one team fails to show for a rescheduled game then that team will lose by default. If both teams fail to show for a rescheduled game, the game will go down as not being played, no stats or points will be awarded, and the game will not be rescheduled.



U4 & U5 Rain Out Procedure

- The Home team calls the Visiting team to agree upon a preferred day and time for the makeup game
- (Getting a second preferred date at this time if possible may save you time later)
- If the Home team does not contact you, please call them. They may not have your contact information. Chris Jossy can provide contact info for teams.
- The Home team contacts the scheduler at stats101@shaw.ca to confirm a field.
- The Home team contacts the Visiting team to confirm date, time and location.

Lightning Safety/ Severe Weather Policy



- **When thunder roars, go indoors!**
- The safety of players, coaches, management and spectators is the primary concern in any weather event that occurs during all matches sanctioned by Canada Soccer. By understanding and following the below information, the safety of everyone shall be greatly increased. Ultimately, the referee has the final say over delaying or restarting a match due to weather. Waiting to stop play or not waiting to start play may result in a serious injury or loss of life. Referees are expected to act responsibly when dealing with such events during matches they are controlling

Additional Information

- Please note the following recommendations from Environment Canada:
- **To plan for a safe day, check the weather forecast first.** If thunderstorms are forecast, avoid being outdoors at that time or make an alternate plan. Identify safe places and determine how long it will take you to reach them.
- **Watch the skies for developing thunderstorms and listen for thunder.** As soon as you hear thunder, quickly get to a safe location. If you can hear thunder, you are in danger of being hit by lightning. More people are struck before and after a thunderstorm than during one.
- **Get to a safe place.** A safe location is a fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing. Sheds, picnic shelters, tents or covered porches do NOT protect you from lightning. If no sturdy building is close by, get into a metal-roofed vehicle and close all the windows.
- **Do not handle electrical equipment, telephones or plumbing.** These are all electrical conductors. Using a computer or wired video game system, taking a bath or touching a metal window frame all put you at risk of being struck by lightning. Use battery-operated appliances only.
- **If caught outdoors far from shelter, stay away from tall objects.** This includes trees, poles, wires and fences. Take shelter in a low-lying area but be on the alert for possible flooding.
- Be aware of how close lightning is occurring. Thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment and its distance from the observer.





Edmonton West Zone
Soccer Association



EWZSA MODIFIED LAWS FOR U4 & U5

LAW I – THE FIELD:

A. Dimensions:

The field of play should be rectangular. 50ft x 64ft. The field should be close to these dimensions; however field space may dictate smaller or larger fields. Try to be as close as possible.

B. Markings:

Sidelines and end-lines with pylons or disks.

Other marking not necessary for the enjoyment and development at this age group.

C. Goals:

Please use either a pop up net or pylons, goal mouth for both are to be the same width. (approx. 4ft)

LAW II – THE BALL:

Size 3 ball should be used for practices and games.

LAW III – NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- A. Number of players on the field at any time will be 6. Each team with 3.
- B. Substitutions: Suggest 2-3 minutes rotating shifts or during any stoppage of play.
- C. Playing time: each player SHALL receive equal playing time.
- D. Teams and games may be co-ed.

LAW IV – PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

- A. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes. (use common sense)
- B. MANDATORY. Shin-guards and socks covering the shin-guards.
- C. Jersey/ T-Shirt: Supplied by community or EWZSA.
- D. NO item of jewelry of any sort will be allowed on the field of play. Medic Alert Bracelets if required must be covered or padded in order to be safe for all players.

LAW V – REFEREE:

Since there are no referees at U4/U5 and the players need to be in close contact with the instructional coach, each team should have one (1) representative on the field. Each representative (preferably the coach) can take half of the field.

LAW VI – LINESMEN: NO LINESMEN AT THIS LEVEL.

LAW VII –DURATION OF GAME:

- A. The first 30 minutes will consist of Skills & Drills. Parents are encouraged to participate with their child.
- B. Followed by a 30 minutes game. 2 x 15 minute halves.

LAW VIII – THE START OF PLAY:

- A. The start of play shall consist of the visiting team starting with the ball at center
- B. The ball may be played forward or backward at the start of play.

LAW IX – BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

- A. Kick-in's only if ball goes out of bounds. The ball is awarded to the opposite that put it outside the field of play. Place the ball on the ground have the player kick it into the field of play.
- B. No throw in's allowed.

LAW X – METHOD OF SCORING:

- A. Goals will be awarded when the ball is kicked between the cones into pup-up net.
- B. No scoring may occur inside the goal area.
- C. Goals must be scored no higher than 3 feet. (If there are no nets)

EWZSA promotes playing for FUN not competition.
Stats and scored are NOT recorded at this age level.

UPDATED. APRIL 2018