



Sporting Development League Technical Standards

*Updated 7/16/2026

General

Category	Standard
Ages	U12 (Boys and Girls), U11 (Boys)
Format	9v9
Game Duration	3 periods of 20 minutes, 5 minutes between each period
Outside Competition - Leagues	All teams within SDL are permitted to play in outside leagues, as long as SDL remains the league of preference in the case of any conflicts.
League/Table	Made up of 12 teams in each age group for boys, 8 teams for girls.
Home/Visiting Team	The team listed first will be the home team for any given fixture. Home team will wear their light-colored kit.
Uniforms	Each player must wear an official uniform with a number on the back of the shirt, including goalkeepers. Alterations to the uniform (using tape or marker for numbers) will not be permitted. Duplicate numbers are not permitted. Teams MUST bring alternate jerseys with a number on the back.
Scoring System	3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss



General

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Referees	3 are required unless agreed upon by all teams playing in the fixture. Home team is required to pay the referees.
Check In	Player cards must be provided for every player on the matchday roster. All matchday rosters must be submitted through PlayMetrics prior to kickoff. Any player who arrives after pre-game check-in may only enter the game once a referee checks them in.
Game Cards/Roster	Home team must print off game cards for the weekend fixtures, these must be handed to the referees prior to kickoff. All rosters must have players and their uniform numbers.
Rules Document	The home team is required to provide the rules issued document to both referees and referee assignor
Forfeits	The minimum number of players required for each game is 6. 10-minute grace period will be allowed beyond scheduled kick-off time before forfeit is declared. If a team fails to complete a match, or fails to show up for a match, a forfeit is declared. Forfeits will be recorded 4-0.
Protests	Absolutely no protests will be tolerated.
Rule Implementation	The home team's failure to implement the technical standards will lead to a 3-0 forfeit for every game that does not adhere to the league rules



Rosters

Category	Standard
Roster Maximum	26 players can be rostered per team
Matchday Rosters	Maximum of 16 players per SDL team
Roster Adds	All teams are permitted an unlimited number of roster adds during the SDL season
Dual Carding	Players are eligible to play on another team within their club while being rostered on their primary team, so long as they meet competition standards and play only 9 periods per day.
Roster Freeze	There is no roster freeze within the SDL
Championship Event Eligibility	Players participating in the regional event must have participated in 50% of SDL matches to be eligible.
Player Designations	There will be no player designations such as Late Developers, Overage Players, or Trapped players within SDL.



Competition

Category	Standard
Match Length	All official games will be 3 periods of 20 minutes with a 5 minute break between periods
Warm Up Periods	Teams must be provided with an appropriate warm-up area 30 minutes prior to kick-off
Age Group Order	Recommended that older age groups play first to accommodate younger Players "playing up"
Kick Off Times	No earlier than 8:30am unless approved by the league.
Substitutions	Substitutions can be made “on the fly” without permission from the referees. Player “A” coming off the field must be all the way off the field before Player “B” can enter the field of play. Rolling subs must be made at midfield ONLY. There is no limit on rolling subs.
Offsides Line	For all age groups, an offside line will be utilized for this age group. Offsides will only be applicable once a player has gone beyond this line in their attacking half, in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game.
Dead Ball Restarts	All dead ball situations where the ball leaves the field of play on the sides of the field will result in a kick in. From the kick in, the team with the ball can either pass the ball into the field of play or dribble into the field of play. If a player passes the ball, the ball MUST NOT leave the ground. Restarts may not take any longer than 5 seconds from when the ball is placed on the boundary line. Defenders must be 5 yards away from the player taking the kick.



Competition

Category	Standard
Corners/Goal Kicks	All corner kicks and goal kicks will be played based on US Soccer regulations and standards.
Match Ball	Size 4 ball must be used for all official SDL matches. The Home team will be responsible for providing match balls.
Hydration	Home team must provide adequate hydration for both teams
Technical Area	Home club must provide adequate seating (benches) for both teams
Athletic Trainers	It is recommended that the Home club must provide a Qualified Medical Professional, QMP (ATC) for all matches. This individual must be available to both home and away Players.
Spectators	Home club must ensure there are no spectators/parents in the technical area or that sideline. Each club is responsible for the behavior of their spectators.
Match Video	Recommended that the Home Club records all matches. The camera must be to the level that it records with sound. This will be a requirement for the Spring season.
Match Changes	All match changes must be approved by the league and all clubs in the fixture. Any changes within two weeks of the designated fixture date may not be approved.



Discipline

Category	Standard
Red Cards	Any player or coach who receives a red card or two yellow cards within the same match will not be allowed to participate in their next scheduled SDL match and a substitution cannot be made for that player within the match where the bookings occurred.
Red Cards - Coaches	If a coach receives a red card and coaches a second team, the second team will not be affected, and the coach will be allowed to coach his/her second team. For example: If a coach receives a red card in his/her U12 game but also coaches a U11 team, that coach can coach his/her U11 team, but will not be allowed to coach the next game for his/her team. If the nature of the booking is deemed serious by the Competition Committee, then the coach may be disqualified from coaching in any of his/her future games for the remainder of the match day. The Committee reserves final say for all ejections and disqualifications.



Facilities

Category	Standard
Field Standards	All matches must be played on a minimum of 70x50 yard field.
Turf/Grass	Matches can be played on either turf or grass if the surface is of high quality.
Field Locations	Clubs can use multiple locations for SDL Regular Season matches, subject to league approval.





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