



## *FAQ's*

### *Frequently Asked Questions and Answers*

#### **How can I locate a soccer program for my child in my community?**

There are a number of ways. You may contact the North County Soccer office (425) 252-2099 for the contact information to a club in your neighborhood or go to the website "Links" page to find a club in your area. Additionally, check with your local school office or websites, newspapers, Parks Department, other parents in your community, go out to your local parks when you see a team playing and speak to the coaches.

#### **At what age can my child begin playing soccer?**

Children can start playing organized soccer at age 3 years. Not all clubs have programs for 3 and 4 years old. Most will begin at age 5. Games are modified to these ages.

#### **Do boys and girls play on the same team?**

In Washington Youth Soccer, boys and girls play on separate teams. On occasion you may see mixed teams. However, by adding one boy onto a "girls" team, that team will be considered a "boys" team. A girl playing on a "boys" team will not change their team classification.

#### **My child has a disability, is there a place for him/her?**

Yes, USYSA TopSoccer is a program for players with mental or physical challenges. Contact the NCYSA office for more information on this program 425-252-2099 or [ncysa@premier1.net](mailto:ncysa@premier1.net).

#### **What does the "U" stand for on my age division?**

The "U" stands for "under". Your child has been placed on a team where all the children are "under" the "age" as of the year of birth. Example if born in 2010 your player was 8 (in 2018) they would be U9. This is confusing so be sure to use the age guidelines posted on the website.

#### **What equipment will my child need?**

The only thing any player really needs is a ball and the desire to play! In addition to your child's desire, players must wear appropriate footwear and shin guards.

Footwear can range from indoor soccer shoes (grooved rubber sole), to turf shoes (small rubber nubs), to cleats (10-12 molded plastic pieces on soles). The field surface and weather conditions will determine the appropriate footwear. The flatter and harder the field, players will want flat, soft shoes (indoor or turf). Playing on grass usually requires cleats.

Shin guards are mandatory equipment for any official game. Shin guards can cost as little as \$5 or more than \$50, depending on the materials. They can range from a simple piece of plastic to state-of-the-art synthetic materials. The strength of the shin guard materials is in direct proportion to the strength of the opponent's kicking ability.

**Can my child use his/her baseball or football cleats?**

It is the responsibility of the referee to determine that all players are in compliance with FIFA Laws of the Game Law 4, which states in part that "A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry)." A referee may look at shoes that have been manufactured for another sport and decide that the shoes would be safe on the soccer field, but it is also possible that a specific shoe, in the opinion of the referee, would be dangerous on the field. The style of baseball shoe that included a flat metal cleat by the toe would undoubtedly fall into this unsafe category. Even some shoes manufactured for soccer could be dangerous. For instance, cleats with screw-in studs may be worn down so that there is metal showing. In such an instance, the referee may consider these to be unsafe.

**Where can I buy soccer equipment?**

Nearly all sporting goods stores will have a variety of soccer shoes and balls for you to choose from.

**When and where are the games?**

Typically, games are held once a week on Saturdays for micro ages U-5/6/7; older ages may play on Saturdays or Sundays. And will typically play in their local community. Ages U-8 and older will travel to neighboring communities for half of their games and your home field for the other half. More competitive teams (Select-NPSL) will travel further (most games will be within King, Snohomish, Pierce Counties but covers from Olympia to Bellingham, as far out as Port Angeles. All games will stay in Western Washington. The highest level competitive teams (Premier-RCL) may play other teams from all over Washington State.

**Does the league record standings?**

Per USYSA no scores are standings are kept for games U-10 and younger.

**How much does it cost to play soccer?**

Registration fees vary from club to club and may have a graduated fee structure for different ages, family discounts and scholarship programs. The club pays a membership fee to NCYSA/WYS for dues and insurance. Club expenses will vary but typically most of the fee goes toward uniforms, equipment, training, field rental or maintenance and referees.

**How long can my child play soccer?**

One of the most appealing aspects of soccer is that it is a lifelong sport that can be played by anyone at any age. North County Youth Soccer administers players from the age of 3 to 19. Players over the age of 19 are considered amateur players and can continue playing through Washington State Adult Soccer Association league. Players may also continue their careers in soccer by becoming youth coaches or referees.

**What are the seasons for soccer and how often do I register?**

North County Youth Soccer Association has fall and spring soccer seasons. Typically, the fall season begins the first week in September and runs for 10 weeks. The 6 week spring season begins in April and end by Memorial Day Weekend.

**How does NCYSA screen its volunteers?**

No coaches, managers, and team/club administrators are given access to children until they have passed through Washington Youth Soccer's Risk Management (RMA) program. Washington Youth Soccer runs a background check on all registered volunteers to ensure no player in our state are put in jeopardy.

**How can I volunteer to help out with a youth soccer team?**

Contact your local community soccer club, or call the North County Soccer Office at (425) 252-2099.

**How will I find out what team I am on?**

Once you have registered with a club and placed on a team your coach will call or email you after their coaches meeting. At that time, all team assignments are finalized and coaches will receive their rosters. Coaches will begin to notify parents regarding practice days/times. Please allow them up to a week to contact you. If you still have not been contacted by a coach, please contact your club registrar.

**Can I choose who I want to be on a team with?**

Unfortunately, when coaches, players and/or parents start choosing up whole teams, the teams can become unbalanced; which is not much fun and defeats the purpose of our recreational program. Please keep in mind that your child will be placed on a team with players from their school or area. Additionally, one of the benefits of recreational soccer is making new friends, experiencing new coaches and new techniques.

**How many players are on a team?**

U-7 & U-8 play 4 v 4 (no goalie); U-9 & U-10 play 7 v 7; U-11 & U-12 play 9 v 9; U-13 and older play 11 v 11.

**How big is the field?**

Field sizes vary by age group. There is a minimum and maximum for each level and field sizes may vary from club to club depending on field availability in their area.

**How many practices will there be? What time are practices? How long are practices?**

Depending on the age and level of league play teams usually practice six to eight sessions before the season begins. Practice continues through the season. Typically, teams will practice 1 or 2 days during the week with a weekend game. Teams playing at higher level of competition may practice 3 times a week. The patterns vary as do the days of the week. Practice times vary by team and is usually determined by the coach.

Practice for U7 and younger should be no more than 45 minutes, once or twice a week. U8-U10 usually one hour to one hour and 15 minutes. U11 and older practices may be 1 ½ to 2 hours depending on the level of competition.

**What about snacks? I see some teams with treats, why?**

Snacks are a part of the game especially for the younger teams. Once teams are formed, a team parent is designated by the coach to organize a "snack list" for that team. Each parent/family is responsible for bringing a small snack and drink for each team member on game day. Typically this is just once during the season. Parents are encouraged to not bring soft drinks or candy as snacks. Sports drinks and fruit juice are good choices. Granola, cereal or crackers are good choices instead of candy. Please be very conscious of the litter that snacks generate and pick up after yourself and your team.

**What if I'm a good player and would like to play in an older age group?**

NCYSA does not encourage "playing up", but it can be allowed in exceptional cases. Each club has internal policies on this so it is best to ask them. Players are usually prohibited from "playing down", but exceptions may be made for documented health or medical reasons.

**What happens during the event of inclement weather?**

Soccer is an all weather sport. We play in almost all weather conditions except heavy rain and electrical storms at the time of game/practice. In the event fields are closed due to unsafe conditions the games will be moved or re-scheduled. Check with your club for their policy/procedures for canceling practice. All attempts will be made to notify you as soon as possible once fields have been closed.

It is always a good idea to check your club website or online game schedule (if available) on the day of play for any last minute closures.

Weather in the mountains is much localized and the weather experience in one area might not be experienced in other locations. If electrical storms are forecast or occur during practice/games, all activity is stopped and all persons must leave the field. We may restart play 30 minutes after any sign of lightning has passed. The presence of rain is not in and of itself a reason to cancel practice or a game; there are times that it is simply raining too much to play. Clubs try to make decisions about weather no later than 1 hour before scheduled times. This is rare.

**What is the refund policy?**

This varies from club to club. Some do not have a refund policy. This is not a punitive measure, nor meant to cause difficulty. Clubs realize that children do frequently change their minds and some children do not want to play soccer after they have tried it. But once your child has registered, a significant portion of the fees submitted go to our parent organizations for membership fees for players and liability insurance. As well as other expenses such as uniforms, etc. Once the club has submitted your child's membership registration to the league, they do not receive a refund if a child stops playing.

**Do I get to keep my uniform?**

Again this varies from club to club. Many clubs provide each player with a uniform (shorts, socks, jersey). Many clubs have adopted a "one color" uniform that is the same for all teams and all divisions. The reason for this is to allow to pre-order uniforms and have them on hand when the season begins. Using one color allows clubs to assign or shift players without need for another uniform. Each coach may be issued a set of color pennies (short for pinafores-scrimmage vests) to distinguish between teams.

Some clubs may require you to purchase your own uniform. Other clubs may provide uniforms and allow you to keep it and ask that you use it for the next season. Or, your club may ask that you return the jersey at the end of the season.

**How will I receive my uniform?**

Your coach will distribute uniforms to you.

**What else do I need?**

For practices you should have your own soccer ball in the appropriate size (size 3 up to U8, size 4 for U9– U12, and size 5 for U13 and older). Appropriate shin guards are mandatory. Players without shin guards may not practice or play in games. No jewelry of any kind is permitted. Earrings must be removed prior to the start of any game; they cannot be taped over. Referees will determine if casts/supports are deemed safe. Water for each child is an absolute necessity. Players should always bring water to each practice and game. We prefer you use a refillable bottle than bringing the disposable bottles. Eyewear should be restrained in some manner. Youth eyeglass lens may be shatter resistant, but you can still get hurt by the frames.

**What can I do with all the stuff that doesn't fit anymore?**

If the equipment you have outgrown is still in good shape, you can donate back to your club. Many clubs conduct an equipment swap every season. Equipment is expensive and kids frequently outgrow shoes and shin guards.

**What about a team or individual picture?**

Each club will generally hold a picture day each season. Make sure to wear your uniform for picture day. Pictures are optional and photographers vary, but most have different photo packages available in a variety of costs.

**Will my child have an end of season activity?**

Each team or age division may have a season end activity. Many teams have picnics, cook outs or pizza parties. The coaches and team parents are responsible for scheduling these activities.

**Do the players receive trophies or medals?** Again this is determined by each team; generally every child that participates receives a trophy, medal or ribbon. These are presented at the conclusion of the season

**How can I help?**

There are many ways for parents to help. The minimum that we ask is for you to be supportive of your child, the coach of your team and the club as a whole. You could also be a head coach, assistant coach or team parent. Show your support by attending as many games as possible and by helping out during practices, if you can.

Every year we need more coaches. This is a fun and rewarding experience that requires time, but can have a significant impact on the lives of a number of children. It is good for all coaches to attend coaching clinics and training, so that all coaches have the information they need to coach effectively. Check with your club for these opportunities. We require all coaches, volunteers and referees to undergo a background check.

If you are interested in helping even more, and can invest time and want to have more responsibility, we have a way! Your club and/or league is run by a hard-working group of volunteers that serve as the Board of Directors. If you are interested in becoming a Board Member or getting involved in one of the standing committees, talk to a current Board member. They are listed your club website.

**What else can I do?**

Volunteer your time. Many clubs are responsible for maintenance of their fields on a weekly basis. This includes mowing, trimming and litter pick-up. If you can help out it provides much value to our children by allowing coaches to spend more time coaching.

On game day or at practice please be sure to use garbage cans and pick-up litter in your area.

Obey field rules. Respect referees, field marshals, coaches, players and other spectators.

Most important: LEAVE YOUR PETS AT HOME. We know that it seems like a perfect opportunity to take your pet out but this is your player's time. Most facilities have rules regarding pets, please abide by them.

**If there is any question you have that is not covered above please contact the NCYSA office for assistance 425-252-2099 or [ncysa@premier1.net](mailto:ncysa@premier1.net).**