

# SASA Coach Playbook 2025

## Section 1: Foundations of SASA Soccer

### 1.1 Our Mission

San Angelo Soccer Association (SASA) exists to make soccer accessible, fun, and focused on player development. We believe the game helps kids grow in confidence, leadership, and teamwork. Our goal is to build better players and stronger people.

### 1.2 Our Philosophy

Soccer is a global game. It is played in streets, parks, and open fields, often with nothing more than a ball and a group of kids ready to play. We honor that spirit by keeping the game simple, joyful, and open to all.

At SASA, we focus on development over results. Every child should have a chance to play, improve, and be part of a team. Soccer teaches life skills like decision-making, resilience, and respect. Our league supports that growth in a positive and encouraging environment.

### 1.3 Who We Are

SASA is a nonprofit recreational league affiliated with the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA). We serve players and families in San Angelo and the surrounding region. We do not run competitive or academy programs, but we learn from nearby leagues to keep our standards high.

### 1.4 How We Operate

SASA is governed by a board of directors responsible for setting policy, managing operations, and ensuring our programs align with our mission. The league depends on volunteers, and we aim to support them with clear communication, fair processes, and a shared commitment to the kids.

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## Section 2: Team Formation and Rostering

- Players are placed into age divisions per NTSSA guidelines.
- Teams are formed randomly by the SASA Registrar. No tryouts or ratings.
- Buddy requests are only accepted for U4–U6 divisions. One mutual request per player.
- Late registrants may be placed only if space allows. No placement preferences.

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## Section 3: Match Rules and Game Day Expectations

### 3.1 Governing Rules

SASA follows IFAB Laws of the Game, modified by U.S. Soccer, NTSSA, and SASA local rules. You will receive an age-specific rule summary from your Age Group Commissioner.

### 3.2 Playing Time

Every player must play at least 50% of each half, regardless of skill or game situation.

### 3.3 Game Day Conduct

- Only rostered players and credentialed coaches are allowed on the team sideline.

- Parents and spectators must stay on the opposite sideline.
- Referees can pause or end games if conduct becomes disruptive.
- Always model sportsmanship and respect for referees, opponents, and families.

### **3.4 Score Reporting, Mercy Rule, and Reschedules**

- Starting at U9, scores must be submitted by Monday after the game.
- If a team leads by 8 goals, the losing coach may choose to end the game at halftime of the second half.
- Once schedules and rosters are released, the league designates a window for rescheduling games. Coaches may request a reschedule within that window. The board will determine and communicate the new date and time.

### **3.5 Referee Expectations**

- Referees are assigned through NTSSA. Do not start a game without an approved referee.
- Contact a field marshal or board member if a referee is missing.
- Do not confront referees. Report concerns afterward through proper channels.

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## **Section 4: Coach Conduct and Responsibilities**

### **4.1 Conduct Expectations**

Coaches are leaders. You are expected to:

- Prioritize safety and development over winning.
- Follow all rules and match format guidelines.
- Show respect to referees, players, parents, and volunteers.
- Maintain professionalism at all times.

### **Illegal recruiting is prohibited under NTSSA policy:**

“Any coach, team official, or club representative who contacts players from another team, club, or association to entice them to leave their current team without the express written consent of their current coach or club is in violation of NTSSA’s recruiting rules.”

### **4.2 Required Training**

To coach in SASA, you must:

- Complete a background check through NTSSA
- Finish all NTSSA and SafeSport training
- Complete any SASA-specific requirements before practices or games

### **4.3 Coaching Development**

SASA offers free coaching clinics each year. These are optional but highly encouraged.

You’ll also receive:

- Age-specific rule sheets
- Practice planning tools
- Ongoing guidance from league reps

#### **4.4 Practice Expectations**

Coaches must:

- Create a safe, welcoming team environment
- Teach age-appropriate skills and teamwork
- Ensure all attendees receive equal playing time in games
- Communicate clearly and promptly with families

#### **4.5 Game Day Responsibilities**

You are expected to:

- Arrive early and check in with the referee if needed
- Confirm players have proper equipment (cleats, shin guards, no jewelry)
- Lead fair substitutions
- Manage your sideline — only rostered coaches and players allowed
- Support referees and set a positive tone for spectators
- Present your SASA-issued credentials at every game; failure to provide them could result in forfeiture of the match.

#### **4.6 Communication**

Respectful communication is expected at all times — with players, families, referees, and board members. Address concerns through proper channels, not during games.

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### **Section 5: Game Day Operations**

#### **5.1 Sideline Setup**

- Team and spectator sides will be designated.
- Parents must stay off the team sideline and away from goals/corners.

#### **5.2 Game Start and Forfeits**

- Arrive on time. Referees may allow a short grace period.
- A team may play down players, but the opponent is not required to match numbers.
- If a team forfeits late or no-shows, they are responsible for referee fees.

#### **5.3 Uniforms and Equipment**

- Coaches may not require families to buy uniforms. Total cost must not exceed \$45.
- Players must wear matching shirts with numbers.
- Shin guards are required; no jewelry; metal/toe cleats are not allowed.

#### **5.4 Weather Delays**

- Field closures and cancellations are posted online and on social media.
- Coaches must check and relay updates to families.
- Lightning within the area causes automatic delay and evacuation for at least 30 minutes.

#### **5.5 Clean-Up**

Each team is responsible for cleaning up their sideline. Set this expectation with players and families.

## **5.6 Coaching Credentials**

You must have your SASA-issued badge or digital credential available before every game. Referees or field marshals may request it. Failure to produce valid credentials could result in loss of the game.

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## **Section 6: Disciplinary Policies**

### **6.1 Player Discipline**

Referees may issue warnings, yellow cards, or red cards. Coaches must support player understanding and compliance. Red-carded players must leave the field, miss the next match, and may face further consequences.

### **6.2 Coach Discipline**

If removed from a match by a referee or field marshal, you are automatically suspended for at least one game. Additional sanctions may follow depending on the incident. Profanity, threats, and abuse are not tolerated.

### **6.3 Parent and Spectator Discipline**

If a parent or spectator is removed, they must leave immediately. Repeated or severe misconduct may lead to longer suspensions or bans. Coaches are expected to help manage spectator behavior.

### **6.4 Reporting and Appeals**

Report misconduct to your Age Group Commissioner or a board member. The SASA board will review all incidents. Appeals follow NTSSA's formal process; SASA can provide guidance.

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## **Section 7: Annual Review & Updates**

This playbook is reviewed annually and may be updated to reflect NTSSA guidance or operational improvements. Coaches are expected to review it each season and stay informed of any changes communicated by the board.

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## **Appendix A: Division-Specific Rules**

### **U4**

- Players: 4v4
- Duration: Four 5-minute quarters
- Ball Size: 3
- Restarts: Kick-ins only
- Referees: Assigned

### **U5–U6**

- Players: 4v4 (no goalkeepers)
- Duration: Four 5-minute quarters
- Ball Size: 3
- Goal Size: Small (4–6 feet)
- No scorekeeping, standings, or offsides
- Substitutions at quarter breaks
- Focus: basic skills & enjoyment

### **U7–U8**

- Players: 5v5 (with goalkeeper)
- Duration: Two 20-minute halves
- Ball Size: 3
- Goal Size: 6–7 feet
- No punting or dropkicks
- Referees assigned
- Substitutions at stoppages

#### **U9–U10**

- Players: 7v7 (with goalkeeper)
- Duration: Two 25-minute halves
- Ball Size: 4
- Goal Size: 6.5–7 feet
- Build-out line & offsides enforced
- No punting
- Scores & standings tracked
- 8-goal mercy rule

#### **U11–U12**

- Players: 9v9 (with goalkeeper)
- Duration: Two 30-minute halves
- Ball Size: 4
- Goal Size: full size (6.5–7x18–21 feet)
- Standard offsides
- Goalkeeper distribution unrestricted
- Scores & standings tracked
- 8-goal mercy rule

#### **U13 & Up**

- Players: 11v11 (with goalkeeper)
- Duration: Two 35-minute halves (may vary)
- Ball Size: 5
- Goal Size: full size (8x24 feet)
- Standard FIFA rules
- Scores & standings tracked
- 8-goal mercy rule

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**Thank you for volunteering your time and energy to support our players.  
You play a vital role in our league's success.**