AFC FAWLEY FALCONS
ANNUAL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT 2026

PLAYING RULES

The following Playing Rules are based on England Football Guidance and The Football Association Laws for Small Side Football. Except where otherwise stated the Laws of Association Football shall apply. All teams must be affiliated to a County Football association.

LAW 2: The Field of Play

Pitch size for 3 a-side shall be 15 x 20 metres.
Goal size shall be 4 x 2.5 feet.
The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line.

Pitch size for 5 a-side shall be 40 x 30 yards.
Goal size shall be 12 x 6 feet.
Penalty area shall be 16 x 9 yards, with a penalty mark 7 yards from the mid-point between the goalposts.
The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line. This is used as the retreat line when restarting play with a goal kick.

Pitch size for 7 a-side shall be 60 x 40 yards.
Goal size shall be 12 x 6 feet.
Penalty area shall be 18 x 10 yards, with a penalty mark 8 yards from the mid-point between the goalposts.
The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line. This is used as the retreat line when restarting play with a goal kick.

Pitch size for 9 a-side shall be 80 x 50 yards.
Goal size shall be 16 x 7 feet.
Penalty area shall be 32 x 13 yards, with a penalty mark 14 yards from the mid-point between the goalposts.
The field of play is divided into two halves. The centre mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line.

Pitch size for 11 a-side shall be 110 x 70 yards.
The goal shall be 24 x 8 feet.
Penalty area shall be 43 x 17.5 yards, with a penalty mark 19.5 yards from the mid-point between the goalposts.
The field of play is divided into two halves. The centre mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line.

LAW 3: The Ball

Ball size 3 for U7, U8, U9, U10 and U11 (as per The FA Heading Guidance).
Ball size 4 for U12 and U13.
Ball size 5 for U14, U15, U16 and U17.

No heading the ball for U7, U8, U9, U10 and U11.

Each team shall provide a match ball for their 'home' games. The referee will be responsible for the match ball during the game.

LAW 4: The Players

Each **U7** team squad shall consist of **a maximum of 9 players, where they will be split into 3 groups of 3 players.**

Each **U8 and U9** team squad shall consist of **a maximum of 10 players, from which 5 shall be chosen for each match.**

Each **U10 and U11** team squad shall consist of **a maximum of 13 players, from which 7 shall be chosen for each match.**

Each **U12 and U13** team squad shall consist of **a maximum of 15 players, from which 9 shall be chosen for each match.**

Each **U14, U15, U16 and U17** team squad shall consist of **a maximum of 16 players, from which 11 shall be chosen for each match.**

One player of each team shall be the goalkeeper (however if there isn't a designated goalkeeper within a team, this role can be shared across other players).

Teams must be able to field at least 4 players for 5 a-side, 5 players for 7 a-side, 6 players for 9 a-side and 7 players for 11 a-side before the game is started.

Late players may join the game with the permission of the referee. If a team fails to turn up at the designated time, with the minimum number of players, the match shall be awarded to their opponents as a 2-0 win.

If the playing strength of a team is reduced at any time to fewer than 4 players for 5 a-side, 5 players for 7 a-side, 6 players for 9 a-side and 7 players for 11 a-side, the game shall be stopped and be awarded to the opponents as a 2-0 win, or if more advantageous to the opponents, the score prevailing at the time the game was stopped.

Substitutions may be made at any time during the game with the permission of the referee, on an unlimited rolling basis. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another player ("rolling subs").

A substitution may only be made when indicated by the referee. In general, this will be when the ball has gone out of play, and the referee may require the following conditions:

- the player leaving the playing area shall do so at the halfway line.
- the player entering the playing area shall do so from the halfway line, but not until the player leaving the playing area has passed completely over the side line.

To ensure the tournament is a positive and enjoyable experience for all participants, all teams entered to an age group will be reviewed and streamed into groups of similar abilities and experience. Teams that play up a year are requested to register into the same age group as they play in their league. In addition to this, registration by elite and academy level teams are not permitted.

LAW 5: The Player's Equipment

Goalkeepers must wear a distinguishing playing top. Players must wear shin guards, which must be covered entirely by the socks. **NO MINI SHIN GUARDS PLEASE.**

Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependant of the weather. Footwear shall be worn in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

Players are not permitted to wear any kind of jewellery (including pierced earrings). Tape over earrings is not acceptable.

LAW 6: The Referee & Other Match Officials

Each match is controlled by an FA affiliated referee (qualified officials registered through their local County Football Association), who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game. Clubs are reminded that they may be appointed a young referee to officiate their matches and must remember that the young referee, like the player, is developing his/her skills. Please therefore support the referee!

To enable clubs to identify young referees, U18's will wear arm bands.

Assistant Referees (Linesman / Lineswoman) are **not** required for **U7, U8, U9, U10 and U11** matches (3 a-side, 5 a-side and 7 a-side games)

One Assistant Referee (Linesman / Lineswoman) shall be appointment by each **U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17** team. Duties, subject to the decision of the referee, are to indicate:

- When the whole of the ball leaves the field of play.
- Which team is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or thrown in.
- When a player may be penalised for being in an offside position.
- When a substitution is requested or when any other incident occurs out of the view of the referee.
- Whether, at penalty kicks, the goalkeeper moves off the goal line before the ball is kicked and if the ball crosses the line.

The Referee is the sole judge; Assistant Referees are there to assist the Referee NOT insist.

LAW 7: The Duration of the Match

The duration of the game shall be in accordance with the number of teams entered in each group and subject to the maximum playing times set by the F.A.

U7 matches will be **12 minutes** duration, with no half time.
U8 and U9 matches will be **10 minutes** duration, with no half time.
U10, U11, U12 and U13 matches will be **15 minutes** duration, with no half time.
U14, U15, U16 and U17 matches will be **20 minutes** duration, with no half time.

Times for each group will be confirmed on the Tournament Management System group schedule.

- Allowance shall be made in either period for lost time through stoppage as decided by the referee.
- The duration of the game shall be extended to enable a penalty kick to be taken.

LAW 8: The Start and Restart of Play

The 'home' team gets choice of ends. The away team starts the game with the first kick-off. A kick-off is taken at the centre of the playing area to start the game and after a goal has been scored.

Opponents must be:

- 5 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field of play for U7, U8, U9, U10 and U11
- 7 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field of play for U12 and U13.
- 10 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field of play for U14, U15, U16 and U17
- The ball can be kicked in any direction.

A dropped ball is a way of re-starting the match when the referee stops play, and Law does not require a direct/indirect free kick to take place.

LAW 9: The Ball in and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when:

- It has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line, whether on the ground or in the air.
- Play has been stopped by the referee.

The ball is in play at all other times including when:

- It rebounds from a goal post or the cross bar.
- It rebounds from the referee when on the playing area.

The goalkeeper shall not handle the ball outside the penalty area. If a goalkeeper leaves the goal area, he is then treated as any other player. The pass back rule shall apply. Players from both sides are allowed within the penalty area and a goal may be scored from any location within the whole playing area including the penalty area.

LAW 10: Method Of Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no offence has been committed by the team scoring the goal.

The team scoring the greater number of goals is the winner. If both teams score no goals or an equal number of goals the match is a draw.

LAW 11: Offside

Teams will be playing on the correct size pitch for their age group; therefore, normal rules apply as per The Laws of the Game.

No offside for U7, U8, U9, U10 and U11.
Offside applies for U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17.

LAW 12: Fouls and Misconduct

Normal rules apply, as per The Laws of the Game.

However, in U7, U8, U9, U10 and U11 all free kicks are **DIRECT** and shall be taken from the place where the infringement occurred. If a deliberate header occurs, an **INDIRECT** free kick is taken at the point where the ball was deliberately headed, except where a player deliberately heads the ball within their own penalty area. The referee will stop

the game and restart with an indirect free kick to the opposition from the nearest side line of the penalty area where the offence took place.

A goalkeeper is not allowed to pick the ball up from a pass back or a throw in. If this happens a free kick should be given on the penalty area closest to where the incident occurred.

A goalkeeper who controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than 8 seconds will be penalised, with a corner kick awarded to the other team. There is no disciplinary action unless the goalkeeper repeatedly commits the offence.

A player who has been sent off may not take any further part in the game.

LAW 13: Free Kicks

For ALL Free Kicks in U7 age groups, it must be 3 yards from the goal, and opponents.

For ALL Free Kicks in U8, U9, U10 and U11 age groups, opponents must be 5 yards from the ball.

For ALL Free Kicks in U12 and U13 age groups, opponents must be 7 yards from the ball.

For ALL Free Kicks in U14, U15, U16 and U17 age groups, opponents must be 10 yards from the ball.

LAW 14: The Penalty Kick

As per The Laws of the Game, a penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits an offence for which a direct free kick is awarded inside its own penalty area.

Position of the Ball and Players – All players except the defending goalkeeper and the kicker must be outside the penalty area and at least:

- No penalty kicks occur in U7.
- 5 yards from the penalty mark for U8, U9, U10 and U11
- 7 yards from the penalty mark for U12 and U13
- 10 yards from the penalty mark for U14, U15, U16 and U17

The ball must be kicked forward.

Penalty shoot-out will be **3 penalties for U8 to U11 and 5 penalties for U12 to U17**, with only players who were on the field of play at the final whistle being eligible to take part. The team winning a toss of the coin will decide the team to take the first kick.

If scores are equal after both teams have taken 3 (U8 to U12) or 5 (U13 to U17) penalties, it will become 'Sudden Death' with the remaining players, including the goal keepers, taking the remaining kicks required. If the scores are equal after all players have taken a penalty, both teams start again with the players taking kicks in the same order, and it still being 'Sudden Death' until a winner is decided.

LAW 15: The Throw-In, Pass or Dribble-In

As per the recent changes to Mini-Soccer, if a U7, U8, U9 and U10 player touches the ball over the touchline, a pass or dribble-in is given to the opposing team. A kicker taking a pass or dribble-in may choose to touch the ball again before it is touched by another player. A goal cannot be scored directly from a pass or dribble-in.

As per The Laws of the Game, a throw-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when the whole of the ball passes over the touch line for U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17.

LAW 16: The Goal Kick

As per The Laws of the Game, a goal kick awarded when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.

For U7 after a goal, the game restarts with a goal line restart for the team that has just conceded.
For U8, U9, U10 and U11 games, goal kicks can be taken from anywhere inside the penalty area. Opponents must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play.

For U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17 games, goal kicks must be taken from anywhere in the 6-yard box.

A defender may take the goal kick instead of the goalkeeper.

When the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her hands they may return the ball into play by throwing or rolling the ball. The throwing out of the ball can be overarm or underarm.

For ALL teams a drop kick will be allowed.

LAW 17: The Corner Kick

As per The Laws of the Game, a corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team, and a goal is not scored.

For U8, U9, U10 and U11 games, opposing players must remain at least 5 yards from the ball until it is in play.

For U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17 games, opposing players must remain at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play.

Optional – Power Play Law

If both managers agree for U8, U9, U10 and U11 teams, if a team is losing by a four-goal difference, they can put an additional player on – so 5v5 becomes 6v5. If the score returns to less than a four-goal difference the team takes off a player. It does not have to be the last player to come on.

If a team goes on to be losing by a six-goal difference a further additional player can be added – so 6v5 becomes 7v5.

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ANNUAL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT 2026

ADMINISTRATION RULES

MANAGEMENT OF THE TOURNAMENT

The annual football tournament will be held under the name of AFC FAWLEY FALCONS. The tournament, all Clubs and other persons shall be subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association.

CLUBS ELIGIBLE TO ENTER

The Tournament has received sanction from Hampshire Football Association Limited. Each team participating must be affiliated to a County Football Association and will be required to notify their County F.A. Organisation I.D. for **Season 2025/26** to AFC Fawley Falcons on submission of their completed entry form.

PLAYERS QUALIFICATION

The tournament is for boys and girls - age groups available this year are **U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U12 Girls, U13, U13 Girls, U15, U16 and U17 Girls.**

The ruling date for the age being midnight on **31st August 2026**. No player may play more than one year up. For example, U11 players must have been under 11 years old (and not less than 9 years old) at midnight on **31st August 2026**.

For U7's, the players must have attained the age of 6 as at midnight on **31st August 2026** but must be under the age of 7 as at midnight on **31st August 2026**. A child who has not attained the age of 6 shall not play and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play in a match of any kind.

All players shall be bona fida registered members of their club and may only play for one club & one team. Before the commencement of the competition, each team shall submit a list of players eligible to participate, together with dates of birth into the tournament management system. Evidence of date of birth and registration shall be provided if requested. Failure to do so may result in the player being excluded from participation in the competition. Where a club enters more than one team in the tournament, **no player may be registered by or play for more than one team, unless authorised by the organising committee.**

3v3 - Each U7 team squad shall consist of **no more than 9 players, where they will be split into 3 groups of 3 players. There are no goalkeepers.**

5v5 - Each U8 and U9 team squad shall consist of **no more than 10 players, from whom 5 shall be chosen for each match, 1 of which shall be the goalkeeper.**

7v7 - Each U10 and U11 team squad shall consist of **no more than 13 players, from whom 7 shall be chosen for each match, 1 of which shall be the goalkeeper.**

9v9 - Each U12 and U13 team squad shall consist of **no more than 15 players, from whom 9 shall be chosen for each match, 1 of which shall be the goalkeeper.**

11v11 - Each U15, U16 and U17 team squad shall consist of **no more than 16 players, from whom 11 shall be chosen for each match, 1 of which shall be the goalkeeper.**

To ensure the tournament is a positive and enjoyable experience for all participants, managers are requested to enter their team into the age groups equivalent to their current league division.

For example, if a team plays in Eastleigh & District Mini-Soccer League 'Lower' Divisions, the team will need to be entered into the lower division age group. All team entries will be verified that they have entered the correct ability age group.

Teams that play up a year are requested to register into the same age group as they play in their league.

In addition to this, registration by Junior Premier League, Elite and Academy level teams are not permitted.

ENTRY FEE

The entry fee shall be:

£40 per team for U7
£45 per team for U8 and U9.
£50 per team for U10 and U11.
£55 per team for U12 and U13.
£70 per team for U15 and U16.

A minimum of 2 months' notice is required should any team need to withdraw from the tournament. If less than 2 months' notice is given, then any refund will be at the discretion of AFC Fawley Falcons and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

COPIES OF RULES

A copy of the Rules shall be given to all participating clubs and are binding on them, having already been agreed and approved by the Hampshire Football Association Limited.

TEAM COLOURS

Each team shall register its first (1st) and second (2nd) choice of colours with the Tournament Management Committee before the commencement of the competition. In the event of kit colour clashes, the designated away team will be required to change their colours. Players shall be dressed in uniform shirts and shorts, but the goalkeepers shall wear colours which distinguish them from other players and referees. The goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms. (No player including the Goalkeeper shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts in accordance with The FA Standard Code of Rules).

ARRANGEMENT OF TOURNAMENT

Teams are to be at the ground 30 minutes before the group section starts. Teams not arriving at the designated time will be deemed to have withdrawn and shall forfeit all fees paid.

Each team shall provide a match ball for their 'home' games.

U7 teams play on a non-competitive basis, therefore match results are not recorded and no points awarded. **Each team (3 groups of 3 players) shall play each team in its group once (no rotation).**

The U8 – U17 teams will be divided by the Management Committee into two groups. Each team shall play each other in its group once, as per the schedule on the Tournament Management System.

U8 and U9 teams play on a non-competitive basis, therefore match results are not recorded and no points awarded. **Each team shall play each other in its group once, then both group 1st placed teams will play each other, 2nd placed teams will play each other and the same applies for 3rd, 4th and 5th placed teams so that the final match is of similar ability.**

U10 to U17 teams play a competitive competition. **The 1st and 2nd placed teams from each group will go on to play for the Cup Competition. 3rd and 4th placed teams from each group will go on to play for the Plate Competition.**

3 points shall be awarded for a win and 1 point for a draw.

In the event of two or more teams in the U10 to U17 groups being equal on points, the team with the best goal difference shall take precedence. In the event of goal difference being equal, the team scoring the most goals shall take precedence. If these measures fail to separate the teams, the result of the match between the teams shall determine the placing. If still equal, a penalty competition shall be held as detailed in playing rules.

U7 matches will be **12 minutes** duration, with no half time.
U8 and U9 matches will be **10 minutes** duration, with no half time.
U10, U11, U12, U12 Girls, U13 and U13 Girls will be **15 minutes** duration, with no half time.
U15, U16 and U17 Girls matches will be **20 minutes** duration, with no half time.

Although, this may be varied to allow for the maximum playing time limits.

The Cup competition will be as follows:

Cup Semi Final 1	**1st placed team Group 1**	**v**	**2nd placed team Group 2**
Cup Semi Final 2	**2nd placed team Group 1**	**v**	**1st placed team Group 2**
Cup Final	**Winner Cup Semi Final 1**	**v**	**Winner Cup Semi Final 2**

The Plate competition will be as follows:

Plate Semi Final 1	**3rd placed team Group 1**	**v**	**4th placed team Group 2**
Plate Semi Final 2	**4th placed team Group 1**	**v**	**3rd placed team Group 2**
Plate Final	**Winner Plate Semi Final 1**	**v**	**Winner Plate Semi Final 2**

If the scores are level, then an extra three minutes one way will be played. If the match is still undecided, then a penalty contest will be held to decide the winner, on the following basis:

For U10 to U13, each team using **3** different players, will take **3** penalties alternately into the same goal. The goal will be decided by the referee. If the score is still equal after **3** penalties, the winning team will be the first to score without response from their opponents (sudden death). A substituted player or an unused substitute will not take part in the penalty competition, only those players already on the pitch.

For U15 to U17, each team using **5** different players, will take **5** penalties alternately into the same goal. The goal will be decided by the referee. If the score is still equal after **5** penalties, the winning team will be the first to score without response from their opponents (sudden death). A substituted player or an unused substitute will not take part in the penalty competition, only those players already on the pitch.

REPORTING OF RESULTS

It will be the responsibility of the referee to report the result of the game to the Control Centre immediately after the game has ended.

REFEREES

FA affiliated referees (qualified officials registered through their local County Football Association), shall be appointed by the competition organisers. These referees shall have the same powers and duties as laid down in the Laws of the Game. The duties of timekeeper / scorer shall be the responsibility of the referee. The Referees decision on any matter relating to the rules of the game will be final. Where possible three officials will be appointed to all Final matches. A daily fee will be paid to referees to cover all reasonable expenses.

PROTESTS AND CLAIMS

All questions of eligibility, qualification of players or interpretation of the rules shall be referred to the Tournament Management Committee, but no objection relative to the dimensions of the playing area or a related matter shall be entertained by the Committee unless a protest is lodged with the referee before the commencement of the match. All protests shall be made in writing to the Tournament Organiser within five minutes of the end of the match and shall be accompanied by a fee of £50 which shall be forfeited should the protest not be sustained. All matters of dispute shall be referred to and decided by the Tournament Management Committee. Their decision is final.

APPEALS

Any appeal against a decision of the Tournament Management Committee shall be made in duplicate to the Hampshire Football Association within 14 days of the posting of the decision and shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee as laid out in the County Handbook.

MISCONDUCT

A player who is sent off the field for misconduct or reported by the referee for misconduct before or after a match, shall be excluded from further participation in the competition. All cases of misconduct shall be reported to and dealt with by the appropriate County Football Association. No substitute is allowed for a player dismissed for misconduct during the game in which the offence occurred.

TROPHIES & MEDALS

All trophies presented to the winning teams in the Tournament will be theirs to keep and do not need to be returned to AFC Fawley Falcons.

U7, U8 and U9 teams play a non-competitive tournament; therefore, each player will receive a participation medal.

U10 and U11 teams play a competitive tournament; therefore, winning teams will receive a team cup or plate trophy, with each player receiving a winners or runners up trophy. Those team players that do not make it through to the cup/plate competition will receive a participation medal.

U12 to U17 winning teams will receive a team cup trophy or plate trophy, with each player receiving a winners or runners up trophy.

MISCELLANEOUS

The organisers do not hold themselves responsible for any injury, damage or loss sustained because of the Tournament and the committee reserve the right to accept, reject or vary an entry.

Any matter arising that is not covered by these rules shall be dealt with by the Management Committee. Failure to comply with these rules may result in any team being withdrawn from the Tournament immediately.