

Equipment and Jewelry Policy: Equipment falls into three categories: required, optional, prohibited.

*Required:* Players are required to wear the following equipment for soccer: shoes, socks, shin-guards, shorts, and shirt. Cleats are strongly recommended. Shin-guards must be completely covered by the socks. No gear may have sharp edges.

*Optional:* In cold weather - sweatpants, sweatshirts, jackets (<-all these should be worn under the uniform), gloves/mittens, and soft hats/ear-muffs are permissible. Eye-glasses for visual acuity are allowed, but it is recommended to use ones designed for sports to reduce the risk of cuts from frames or glass due to impacts with players or the ball.

*Prohibited:* All other extraneous gear is specifically prohibited under the rules of youth soccer. This includes all jewelry. It is not permitted to simply wrap/pad jewelry. Jewelry includes rings, watches, bracelets, wristbands, necklaces, ear-rings, body piercings, etc.

*Jewelry Exceptions:* Medical alert (bracelet/necklace) or a religious symbol (necklace) may be worn if wrapped (bracelet/necklace) and secured inside the shirt (necklace).

Note: If you have a recent piercing (6 weeks) that should not be removed (to prevent the hole from closing), you will NOT be permitted to play with the jewelry carefully wrapped to cover all sharp edges. Jewelry must be removed if you intend to play. Please, please, please, DO NOT GET A PIERCING BEFORE OR DURING SOCCER SEASON. If you cannot or choose not to remove it, you will not be allowed to play.

Weather Policy: Soccer is played in the rain. We will play/practice in dry conditions down to (after adjusting for wind chill) 35°F, and wet to 45°F. In cold weather, please be sure to dress appropriately in layers. In hot weather, please be sure you have sufficient water. These precautions should be observed by both players and spectators. Soccer is NOT played with lightning/thunder. If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, players will be asked to clear the field and take appropriate shelter. The soccer bridge is NOT a shelter (you can be struck by lightning under a tree such as those present at the bridge). Inside a vehicle IS shelter. Play may not resume for a minimum of 20 minutes from the most recent occurrence of lightning/thunder. Coaches have the authority to decide whether they will resume games/practices after the required lightning delay or be cancelled instead.

Background Checks: Forest Ridge now requires and conducts criminal background checks on all referees and coaches who are working with our players. The reality today is that these are necessary to deter and identify potential child predators before they use our program to gain access to potential victims.

Concussions: Forest Ridge is compliant with Ohio Law regarding mandatory concussion training for all coaches and referees. Concussions are a mild brain injury typically caused by an impact with the ball, players, the ground or the goal posts. Given time to heal, the brain will recover fully. However, without being given time to heal properly, the damage and decreased brain function will often become permanent. If a coach or referee suspects a potential concussion has occurred, the player will not be allowed to return to play until a medical doctor qualified to assess concussions has cleared the player to return.

Throughout youth soccer, in order to promote a safer playing environment, all players in 12 and under divisions (which applies to all divisions of Forest Ridge) are prohibited from deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head, (a.k.a. heading) in both games and practices.

Lindsay's Law: Lindsay's Law is about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. This law went into effect in 2017. SCA is the leading cause of death in student athletes 19 years of age or younger. SCA occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. SCA is fatal if not treated immediately.

Any of these things may cause SCA:

- 1) Structural heart disease. This may or may not be present from birth
- 2) Electrical heart disease. This is a problem with the heart's electrical system that controls the heartbeat
- 3) Situational causes. These may be people with completely normal hearts who are either hit in the chest or develop a heart infection

Warning signs of SCA: If any of these things happen with exercise, see your health care professional:

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Unexplained fainting/near fainting or dizziness
- Unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusually fast or racing heart beats