



2026/2027 Seasonal Year Updates

Alignment and Age Group Change FAQs

Why is the age group change happening?

US Youth Soccer, in conjunction with US Soccer, made the decision to change the age groups to follow a school year calendar. This change is designed to reduce the number of “trapped” players who are separated from their school grade level. This allows teams to better align with grade placement so players can participate alongside their school friends. Players are still grouped by birth dates, not grade level. But it does more closely align to grade levels.

The new age group window is August 1 – July 31.

How is this going to affect my team?

Please note that the ages of the current players on a team will determine whether the team moves up an age group or remains in its current age group for another year.

Be sure to communicate with your coach and club about how this will directly affect your child.

Can I request an age exception for my child?

Age exceptions can be requested and will be carefully reviewed on a case-to-case basis. For play-down requests, parents must provide a strong explanation as to why the player is requesting this exception. In most cases, a play-down exception will only be granted for 1 year.

When and where can I submit an age exception request?

Age exception requests can be submitted directly to the Youth League Commissioner, Creighton Atkin, who will review the request with the USF President. Please email the completed form to Creighton at catkin@uysa.org.

- [Player Exception Form 2026.pdf](#)

What team age groups are eligible to compete in the gaming league?

Age groups will be offered for the following divisions:

- U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18
 - U15-U18 will be one season with the option to participate in a provisional league during high school.



If teams are splitting, who keeps the alignment spot?

The portion of the team that maintains roster continuity will be the group who keeps the alignment spot. In cases where the team is split perfectly with neither group keeping the majority, the club will decide which group will keep the alignment spot.

Ex. A U12 team has 14 players. 7 players are staying in the U12 age group, 7 are aging up to U13 age group. In this case the club would determine which group maintains roster continuity

Generally speaking, don't try to form 2 teams and expect them to both get to keep their alignment spot.

What is the process for teams to apply for a second alignment spot from a team split?

We understand there will need to be some nuance to aligning teams due to the age group change. Teams who do not keep roster continuity with their team splitting can submit a SAR Form to the alignment committee requesting to maintain their current alignment spot. These requests will be evaluated based on the number of returning players, and available space in the requested division.

- [SAR Form](#)
- [Alignment Committee contact information](#)

Are there continuity requirements?

Yes! Current continuity rules still apply meaning to hold your spot you must have 50% +1 of your roster returning. Continuity applies to teams U13 and up.

Ex: A U14 team has 16 players on their 2025-26 roster. To maintain roster continuity they would need 50% (8 players) plus 1 (9 players) from their 2025-26 roster to be on their 2026-27 roster.

Ex: A U17 team has 17 players on their 2025-26 roster. To maintain roster continuity they would need 50% (8.5 players) plus 1 (9.5 players) on their 2026-27 roster from their 2025-26 roster. Because we can't count half players, this team would have their 9.5 continuity requirement rounded up to 10 players.

How will the U9-U12 No Scores No Standings work with alignment?

U9-U12 age groups will be self-alignment (U12's planning to play premier will still need to have played SCL Red at U11) There are no roster continuity requirements at this age group, and teams will be allowed to align how they see fit.



Utah Soccer Federation

9159 South State Street

Sandy UT 84070

801-307-5150

Will U15 aged teams play one season or year-round?

U15 will be their 9th grade year, so we plan to have U15 be one season. Fall for the boys and Spring for the girls.

Utah Soccer is the leader in promoting, developing and governing soccer in Utah; providing quality educational and developmental opportunities for all members.