

Making a Good First Impression

Know the Laws: Success begins by being prepared.

- Read and know the Laws of the Game. Keep up to date on the correct interpretation.
- Know the accepted mechanics approved by the USSF and found in the *Guide to Procedures for Referees, Assistant Referees and 4th Officials*. You should have received this booklet in your entry level course.
- Know the local Rules of Competition. You can usually find them out by checking the league's website or asking your assignor. In particular, make sure you know:
 - Length of the half
 - Size of ball
 - Number of players
 - Substitutions
 - Penalty kicks or no penalty kicks
 - Direct free kicks allowed or only indirect free kicks
 - Offside, no offside
 - What you do with the game report
 - Uniform requirements
- As a new referee, you will not make all the right decisions. Don't get upset if you make a mistake. Just learn from it. And learn from working with and watching more experienced referees.



Dress and Act Professional:

- If you expect to command respect (one element of game control) on the field, then you must look and act like a professional.
- Approach the game in a way that shows you are looking forward to being there and being a part of the game.
- Dress for success - wear the proper USSF uniform with your referee jersey tucked in and your socks pulled up. Wear the uniform properly any time you can still be seen by the players, coaches, and spectators.

Take Charge:

- Taking charge does not mean yelling and acting like a dictator. This only encourages people to yell back at you.
- Greet each coach with a firm handshake, a smile and look each coach in the eyes.
- Use common courtesy- "Thank you", "Please", "Sir", "Ma'am" will do wonders to get respect.
- Issue firm, simple instructions to the players so they know you are capable of managing the game.
- Start the game on time.

What You Need to Have:

- An approved USSF referee uniform. The gold shirt is the most often used referee shirt jersey color for referees so it should be the one jersey you purchase right away. If you are only getting one jersey, then (depending on your climate) you should probably buy the short sleeved one. You can add the long sleeve jersey later after. Once you have more game experience, you should add one of the alternate color jerseys. You do not need to buy all the different colored jerseys right away. However, if you advance as a referee, then you will need to add the alternate colors over the next few years.



- Solid black referee shorts or black shorts with the USSF Referee logo on the leg.
- Black socks with either three white stripes at the top or the USSF logo at the top. Socks should always be pulled up to your knees. Pulling the socks down to your ankles when off the field may help your “tan line” but it looks unprofessional.
- Solid black shoes – a brand logo is OK, preferably only white, but no other colors or decorations – you will be spending a lot of time in your referee shoes so make sure they are very comfortable (and keep them cleaned as much as possible).
- Your current year USSF badge on the left shirt pocket of your jersey.
- Your 16 digit USSF identification number for tournaments. You will find this number on the ID card you receive in the mail after you have taken the course and registered. You will get a new card each year, but the number will always be the same. If you need your ID number before you receive your card, please contact the State Referee Office at 847-690-9881. If they don’t have it, then you may contact U.S. Soccer.
- A referee bag that should contain the following:
 - A watch with stopwatch functions – two watches are preferred, one for starting and stopping and one for keeping a running time in case you forget to start or restart the first one
 - Pens/pencils
 - Notebook
 - Red and yellow cards
 - Tossing coins
 - Whistles – always have an extra in your bag
 - Flags for the Assistant Referees or Club Linesmen (if you are working alone)
 - Cold weather gear when the time of year makes it necessary
 - Street shoes and dry socks
 - A large plastic trash bag (to put your ref bag inside in case of rain)
 - Sunscreen
 - Snacks (energy bars are great!) if you are going to be doing more than one game
 - Rubber bands or baggies to hold and separate player/coach cards for each team
 - Water – don’t forget to bring water

What You Need to Do:

You should arrive at the field at least 30 minutes prior to the game.

- If you don't drive, first make sure that someone knows you need a ride to your field and, second, make sure you have made arrangements for someone to pick you up to take you home.
- Bring change for emergency telephone calls or a cell phone, and have the telephone number of your assignor and club contact.