



## Select Soccer Handbook

## **LT ELITE**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to be the best youth soccer club in the Austin and Central Texas communities while developing great people of character.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Our philosophy is to develop every player's technique and skill. We teach on the technical attributes of the game. Every practice is centered around delivering the highest level of technical training, with emphasis on ball mastery and teamwork.

We passionately believe that if a player plays with skill and loves the game, the results will take care of themselves. Our players are taught to take risks, play expansive soccer, and attack with skill and speed, while adopting defensive discipline.

Off the field and within the Lake Travis community, we want to ensure that LT Elite communicates with its parents and players openly and diligently. We are building a soccer family and in order to do that, communication is vital.

## PLAYERS

Our club expects players to develop and maintain a tradition of excellence. We feel that it is important to have positive recognition through exemplary dress, behavior, and playing style.

### **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

- Commitment. Select is a 1-year commitment to LT Elite Soccer and it takes priority over all other sports a player is enrolled in. Academy is a 4 month commitment and enrolls twice a year.
- Maintain team and club dress standards (general appearance, clean uniforms, and equipment). Only official club apparel is permitted when our teams compete or train.
- Strictly adhere to coach and team manager instructions.
- Attend all practices and clinics. Players are expected to be punctual and ready to start when an activity begins.
- Attend all games and arrive at least 45 minutes prior to the game start time, unless otherwise instructed by your coach or manager.
- Maintain the highest standards of conduct and good sportsmanship.
- **Absolutely no negative comments or gestures toward officials, opponents, or teammates. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse.**
- Give a 100% effort each and every time you are on the field.
- Maintain high academic standards.

### **PRACTICE AND CLINICS**

Players are expected to attend all practices and clinics. If a player is unable to attend a practice, they must contact the coach or team manager as soon as possible to explain the reason for the absence. Failure to attend practices may result in loss of playing time.

Players are expected to be punctual. They should be dressed and ready to take the field at the stated time. If players are late they will run the risk of being penalized before joining the rest of the team. Players must bring their own water.

Players must wear practice tees and shorts, shin guards, socks and cleats to all practices or clinics. All parts of the uniform must be clean. Watches and other jewelry are not allowed.

Trainers and coaches deserve respect at all times. Disruptive behavior is detrimental to the entire team, wastes valuable time, and will not be tolerated.

Players must respect each other to promote effective teamwork. On the field, everyone must work toward a common goal. Soccer is very competitive and physical, but mutual respect is expected and required. During practice, trust and respect is being developed so that under the pressure of a game situation the individual players will work together as a team.

Practice develops skills and conditioning that are used during a game. Thus, it is necessary to practice with game intensity.

## **GAMES**

Teams assemble at the playing field a minimum of 45 minutes prior to the start of the match, unless instructed by the coach. If a player arrives late, loss of playing time may be the result. Any player unable to attend a game must inform the team coach in advance.

Players must bring their entire uniform to every game. This includes all jerseys (in case of color conflicts), shin guards, socks, and cleats. All parts of the uniform must be clean. All bags and equipment should be lined up in an orderly fashion. Only official club apparel is allowed on game days. Players must bring their own water.

After arriving at the field, the players should begin warming up and stretching under the instruction of the coach. It is important to concentrate on the upcoming game during the warm-up with no goofing around. Players are to be focused. A good warm-up is not only the

key to being prepared for the game, but it is also a reflection on the professionalism that our club promotes.

From the start of warm-up until the time the team leaves the field after the game, the team coach will direct the activities of all players. Players on the sidelines should stand together, concentrating on the match, supporting their teammates on the field, and ready to enter the game. Following the match, if the team or a group of players stay to watch other games, those individuals still represent our club, and are expected to behave accordingly.

**The team coach is the sole interface with the officials during a game.** Players must accept the official's calls without comment. There is nothing to be gained by antagonizing an official. Regardless of a player's opinion of the quality of the officiating, no comments or gestures are to be made to the officials.

We expect players to be tough but fair. Violent fouls or verbal abuse will result in intervention by the team coach.

## **TOURNAMENTS**

When a team goes to a tournament, it does so with the intent to be as competitive as possible. Thus, it is crucial that each player is prepared (e.g., sufficient rest and diet). The club insists that the team carry out most of its activities together (i.e., at least one meal should be eaten together each day.)

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

All full uniform packages must be purchased through our team store as directed on LTESoccer.com. No modifications to the uniforms will be allowed.

We highly recommend that parents label all of the items with their player's name. This helps when trying to find misplaced items.

### **UNIFORM NUMBERS**

All uniform numbers are assigned and coordinated by the LT Elite office in conjunction with team managers. At the beginning of each two-year cycle, each team will be assigned a range of numbers. The LT Elite office and team managers will input all player numbers for each team into the system to ensure no duplicates exist across each age group as best as possible.

In the event a player changes teams and numbers conflict, the player is responsible for purchasing new jerseys with a new number assigned. LT Elite does not cover the expense of new jerseys for this reason.

### **ADDITIONAL UNIFORM PIECES**

Players are welcome to purchase additional pieces of their uniform kit. This includes extra mandatory items like jerseys, sock, shorts, and additional non-mandatory items like cold weather gear, sweatshirts, etc.

### **HAIR**

Any player with hair long enough to impede vision must wear their hair in a ponytail, braid, hair tie, or headband. Players that do not wear their hair up will not be allowed to practice or play in games.

## PARENTS

There must be understanding and cooperation among parents, players, and coaches to ensure a successful club. Your child's progress and success will depend on this relationship.

### **GENERAL PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

- Support and maintain our club's soccer standards.
- Fulfill your parental and financial obligations.
- Do not interfere with coaches during practices and games.
- Foster an environment for academic excellence and good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example with a positive, non-distracting sideline behavior.

### **SUPPORT YOUR CHILD, COACH, AND CLUB**

Your child needs your positive support at home, on the practice field, and on the competition field. This will allow your player to be more confident, to enjoy soccer more, and to perform better in practice and in competition. A player develops best when they trust and respect the trainer or coach. The coach's job is to motivate, teach, and constructively critique each player's performance. We want the players to relate to their coach regarding soccer issues. A good relationship between coach and player produces the best results.

Be positive at all times. Only words of encouragement should be shouted from the sidelines and restricted to non-coaching comments. That is, **avoid coaching your child during a game.** Parents expressing opinions (e.g., how a player should play, directing a player during a game or practice, what position they should play, how much playing time they should receive, etc.) cause considerable confusion to their own player and to their teammates.

You are encouraged to observe your player and to learn more about soccer. However, when the team is practicing or preparing for a match, please do not disturb or interrupt the coaches

or players. Please remember that practices and clinics are learning situations, and players need to concentrate to improve.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEAM COACH**

If you have particular concerns, suggestions, or questions, please speak directly to the coach or arrange a meeting. Concerns or constructive criticisms are welcome, but should be expressed away from practices and games. If you have questions concerning our club, ask your team coach.

Do not confront a coach during, before, or immediately after a game. If there are any aspects of a particular game that you would like to discuss with the team's coach, arrange for a meeting at a later time. You must wait 24 hours after a game before reaching out to a coach. Emotions can run high and this cool down period ensures communication can be constructive and beneficial. However, if time permits, the coach may hold a post-game talk for players and parents where questions and comments are welcome.

### **VOLUNTEERING**

LT Elite Soccer welcomes volunteerism and appreciates donations of time and resources. Please consider helping your coach and club by serving as a Team Manager. Other volunteer opportunities include helping with the club website, social media, and fundraising. Please contact your coach if you are willing to donate your time.

### **SPECTATOR BEHAVIOR AT GAMES**

Our club maintains high standards for its players, parents, and coaches concerning the area of behavior and conduct. Coaches, trainers, and parents must set an example of good behavior and sportsmanship for our children.

The following is a guideline for proper sideline behavior:

- Dress in proper attire. Club colors are suggested.
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages is not tolerated.
- Smoking is not allowed in areas where players are present.
- Loud, crude, profane, vulgar, or argumentative behavior is not tolerated.
- Negative or derogatory comments/gestures about players, officials, or spectators are forbidden.
- Refrain from verbal exchanges of any kind with opposition players or spectators.
- **Refrain from any comment about the officiating.**
- Do not approach officials at the end of the match.
- Pets are not allowed at FOD or at many other facilities. Please leave them at home.

**We have a zero-tolerance policy towards abusive or belligerent behavior.** Failure to abide by these guidelines will result the spectator being asked to leave the fields. It is the responsibility of each coach, player, and spectator to control his or behavior. Unacceptable behavior could also impact a player's selection at tryouts.

## **TEAM MANAGER**

Each team is expected to have a team manager. The team manager is the main contact for all team information. The manager is responsible for team coordination of activities based on the direction outlined by the team coach

Any issues related to soccer should still be directed to the team coach. The team manager is responsible for coordinating with onsite directors for competitive games, tournaments and other events.

Team managers are not debt collectors. Failure to pay tournament fees, travel expenses, etc. may lead to players being excluded from LT Elite games and programs.

## **SCHEDULE COMMITMENTS**

### **PRESEASON BOOT CAMP**

Every year we hold a preseason Boot Camp for one week in August. The camp fee is \$100 per player and is not included in your annual dues. This camp is used to help players get back into practice mode prior to mandatory practices that start the following week. New players may also be invited to this camp as a form of a tryout. All proceeds from this Boot Camp go to club development and scholarships.

### **PRACTICES AND CLINICS**

Teams practice twice per week with the team's coach. Practices are generally 90 minutes. Practices and clinics are held July through mid-December and end of January through the end of May, as long as the fields are playable and weather permitting. There is no set number of practices per year. In the event of weather related missed practices, the team coach may replace the practices with other programs (e.g., fitness, scrimmages, or soccer video sessions).

Players can attend the practice of another team on an off day if they have cleared their attendance with the coach of the other team.

Our practice and clinic schedule is based on a number of factors: what time an age group gets out of school, other teams trained by the same coach, similar age groups at the same time to allow for scrimmages, etc. We understand that practices or clinics may not be ideal for your player's schedule, but are best for our club as a whole.

### **LEAGUE GAMES**

League scheduled games are played over the course of two seasons: fall and spring. The number of games in each season can be different based on holidays and other breaks. Most games are played on Saturdays and Sundays.

## **TOURNAMENTS**

All club teams are expected to play in tournaments each year. The number of events and the travel involved will vary greatly depending on the skill level and age group of each team. Teams are only entered into tournaments approved by the Director of Coaching. The criteria used to approve a tournament include: strength of opposition, prestige of the tournament, location, availability of coaches, dates of the event, and the number of college coaches in attendance.

**It is the expectation of our club that players will participate in tournaments with their team.**

In the event that a player cannot attend, please notify your team manager immediately so that guest players can be invited. Teams may invite guest players from other teams or clubs to attend tournaments. Guest players should be treated as a regular team member during the tournament.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

LT Elite makes every effort to hold practices, games, and tournaments as scheduled. In the event of inclement weather, LT Elite will update teams and players about closures and cancellations via TeamSnap. TeamSnap is the primary communication tool and allows us to communicate via text, email, and mobile app to all of our families.

LT Elite strives to provide a safe practice environment for players based on current and forecasted weather. ThorGuard lightning warning systems covers our facilities. Any proximity of lightning can cause a postponement or cancellation of practices or games. In the event of lightning warnings, all players and parents must go to their cars immediately and wait for the all clear from the ThorGuard system or LT Elite coaching staff.

In the event of cold weather, players are allowed to wear cold weather gear according to the following guidelines:

- During practices and game warm-ups, players may wear cold weather gear.
- During games, players on the field may wear long sleeve tops under their jerseys that match the jersey color. No leggings or pants may be worn under shorts. Gloves and ear bands are allowed; hats are not allowed.

## TEAM CREATION

### TEAM SIZE

Teams are formed in May/June of each year. Assuming there are sufficient numbers, we will attempt to form at least 1 team for each age group, U11-U18, boys and girls. Players are evaluated and selected by our coaching staff. There is no definite number of players required for each team. Talent level is the main determining factor. However, guidelines are:

U8-U10	7v7	Max 12 per roster (Academy)
U11	9v9	Max 16 per roster
U12	9v9	Max 16 per roster
U13-U14	11v11	16 – 18 players per roster
U15-U18	11v11	18 – 22 players per roster

### PLAYER SELECTION AND TRYOUTS

Tryouts are held in May at the Field of Dreams. Players will check-in and are assigned a number that will be used for all tryout sessions. Parents are required to attend a brief informational meeting before the tryouts. At this time, the Director of Coaching and coaches will explain the tryout process and answer questions. Generally there are multiple sessions for each age group. **Unless otherwise advised by the club's coaches, players should attend all sessions.** This gives the players the best chance to make a good impression and allows our club to make quality comparisons with other players. The tryout format is fundamental skill assessments, small-sided games, and full field games.

## **NOTIFICATION**

If selected, players are offered roster spots the weekend following the conclusion of the final night of tryouts. Saturday tryouts are used exclusively to fill any roster spots that are open after the regular tryout period.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY TRYOUTS**

At any time, at the discretion of the team coach, a new player may be invited to a team practice with the possibility of adding them to the roster. The Director of Coaching and the coach for that team will make the final decision regarding any additions to any roster.

## **GUEST PLAYER POLICY**

Guest players are considered part of the LT Elite club when participating at tournaments and games with our teams. They must adhere to our rules and policies outlined in this handbook. All guest players must pay their respective entry fees and travel expenses separate from the team. The Director of Coaching must approve guest players at least 5 days prior to the game date.

LT Elite players may not guest play with any other clubs without speaking with the team coach and our Director of Coaching. It is possible that the opportunity to guest play is appropriate; each case will be handled individually.

## **CLUB FEES**

The majority of the expenses incurred by the club are financed through fees paid by players to the club. The club will make every attempt to keep expenses down so that fees paid by members are kept as low as possible, while ensuring that enough money is available to achieve our goals of providing excellent training for our players. Fees are based on our club's planned budgetary expenses for the coming year. The annual financial commitment can be divided into several parts:

- Trainer/coach fees
- Administration costs
- League registration fees
- Registration fees for the fall and spring league games
- Field expenses (e.g., lights, water, and maintenance)
- Referee fees
- Tournament fees

## **LEAGUE FEES**

League fees are team dependent and vary based on level of play for your child's team. Our select teams play at the Division 2, Super 2, and Division 1 levels. Each year, the fees are set by STYSA (South Texas Youth Soccer Association), USC (US Club Soccer), WDDOA (Western District Division One Association), and EDDOA (Eastern District Division One Association).

## **TOURNAMENT FEES**

For U11-U18 teams the club provides entry fees for one tournament per team for an end of year spring cup. Additional tournaments attended by a team (fall pre-season, winter/early spring tournaments) will be at additional cost to the players who attend the tournament.

U8-U10 Academy tournaments are also an additional cost.

## **PLAYER COMMITMENT FEE**

A player commitment fee is due upon acceptance of a roster spot and is non-refundable and non-transferrable. The commitment fee covers various administrative costs associated with the processing of player applications, team assignments and other administrative costs. A roster spot is not guaranteed until the appropriate registration forms have been completed and returned along with the commitment fee.

## **COACH TRAVEL EXPENSES**

Individual teams are responsible for the coach's travel expenses incurred for tournaments outside of the local area as defined and approved by the Director of Coaching. Expenses include meals and hotels. For club-wide participation in multiple-day tournaments, teams will equally share expenses.

## **LATE FEE POLICY**

We will allow a 10-day grace period. After 10 days, a late fee of \$25 plus payment of due fees may be charged. After 45 days delinquency the player will not be allowed to play or practice until dues and late fees are paid in full. Parents are also responsible for payments and fees resulting from bounced checks. Additionally, all accounts must be current for a player to be offered a roster spot after tryouts.

## **REFUND POLICY**

All LT Elite soccer fees are non-refundable. LT Elite offers optional insurance through a third party, USSCI. The fees are paid directly to USSCI and are non-refundable. For as little as \$15 for Academy or \$23 for Elite you can get Sports Fee Insurance. That means if your child is injured and can't play you can get a prorated refund. For more information on the insurance plans available or to register, go to [usscinsurance.com/plans/](https://usscinsurance.com/plans/).

Transfers and releases will only be granted if all player's fees and financial obligations have been fulfilled to the club and to their team.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

LT Elite is aware of financial circumstances that families may face. In an effort to include as many talented soccer players as we can, the club will hold fundraisers to reduce these costs and offer scholarships to qualified players. If your child wants to be on a team and you have financial concerns, please contact the Director of Coaching to discuss available options before registering your child. Your concerns and circumstance will be kept confidential. In order to apply for financial aid, the player's parent/guardian must submit a request and application through the LTYA website (see LTYA Scholarship Policy under "About" at [LTYA.org](https://LTYA.org)) and communicate the request with the Director of Coaching. Scholarships will be awarded on case-by-case basis. Financial applications must be approved BEFORE registration and placement on a team may occur.

## **MULTIPLAYER DISCOUNT**

A discount will be applied for each additional sibling registered in the Elite (not Academy) program.

## **FUNDRAISING**

### **SPONSORSHIPS**

There are various levels of sponsorships available with LT Elite soccer. Please refer to the LT Elite website <http://ltesoccer.com/sponsorship/> for more information on the available packages. We encourage all teams and families to actively solicit for sponsorships for their team and the club as a whole. Funds go towards club development and scholarships and can benefit a team directly by helping pay for optional tournaments.

### **TEAM FUNDRAISING**

Teams are encouraged to solicit sponsors and conduct fundraising efforts to offset expenses. There are guidelines that each team should be aware of prior to undertaking these activities so they do not conflict with similar efforts organized by the club as a whole. Please contact your team manager, coach, or the Director of Soccer for more information. We are interested in and actively seek sponsorships (corporate or private) to help keep our fees affordable to our members.

All team managers are required to submit any fundraising opportunities they secure to the Director of Coaching.

- All contracts must be run through the LT Elite program. Team managers cannot sign for the club.
- Any reproduction of the LT Elite logo or design without express consent from LT Elite is prohibited.

## **LT ELITE SOCCER CONTACTS**

Director of Coaching - [Nick Gordon](mailto:ngordon@ltesoccer.com) ngordon@ltesoccer.com

Registrar - [Linda Aldrich](mailto:registrar@ltya.org) registrar@ltya.org

Treasurer - [Chris Albrecht](mailto:chrisalbrecht94@gmail.com) chrisalbrecht94@gmail.com