

How to Become a Referee

Becoming a referee is fairly simple - You first have to attend a clinic, take a test, buy a uniform and do your first game. Being a referee is a great way to give back to the game and make some extra money. If you love the game of soccer, are an adult or youth over the age of 10 and are interested in becoming a referee please sign up now! Here is how...

How to become a United States Soccer Federation (USSF) referee:

A person must attend an entry level referee clinic/course (course usually includes a 3 hour, Friday night session and an all day Saturday session, 7 hours). At the end of the clinic, each candidate must pass a written test. The candidate will then be registered as a Grade R9 (this is not a school grade, but a classification grade) and is given the USSF badge. Certain provisions may be made for adults or college players to enter as a grade 8, but most often everyone begins as a grade 9. The R9 certification is considered a recreational soccer certificate and allows refs to participate in recreation soccer games up to age U14. The course registration fee for a grade 9 certification is approximately \$80. All referees must be recertified each year (regardless of their certification level) and are required to attend a recertification course. The recertification course is a one day, 5 hour course and costs approximately \$75.00 for the R9 and R8 recertification. After an R9 completes at least one season as an R9 they may wish to upgrade (or Bridge) to an R8 certification which would allow them to participate in "Select" and older recreational level games. Referees must complete a Bridge certification course that would upgrade their R9 certification to an R8 Bridge. The cost for the Bridge course is approximately \$80.00 and is usually scheduled as a Friday night and Saturday session.

To find out when and where referee courses are being held in our area, please log on to:

<http://www.gareferees.com> and select "Sign Up For Classes" and then select the class type you need.

NEW REFEREES: If you are a new referee you need to select "Entry Course (R9)" and then determine which course location and date you would like to attend. Then select the blue "date" to review course information and then select "Login Here". You will be connected to the GameOfficials.net webpage and will need to create a USSF account. Select "Don't have a USSF Registration Account / Create One or Find Yours Here" tab and input your information and follow the prompts to complete your class registration. (Remember your user name and password). **CURRENT REFEREES** (who have already registered as a USSF Official through GameOfficials.net) simply need to login by entering your username and password and then follow the prompts to complete your class registration.

The Uniform and Equipment

Now that you've passed the test and have registered with USSF it is time to go out and buy your first uniform. The basic uniform for referees is a yellow shirt, black referee shorts, black socks with three stripes and black shoes. Most referees also have one or two alternate color referee shirts. At Georgia FC and the Gwinnett YMCA we use Red and Black as our main alternate jersey colors. In addition to a uniform, you will need a watch with a timer, a whistle, score cards (with many age groups the teams will furnish refs with game cards/sheets), a flipping coin, red and yellow cards and a set of flags. During the clinic your instructor will give you some uniform and equipment resources but most local soccer stores have a good selection of referee equipment.



Getting Games Assigned to You

Now that you've passed your test, bought your uniform and gear, you are ready to contact the licensed USSF assignor your local soccer club uses to schedule their referees. Ken Flynn is our clubs referee assignor and may be contacted at myrefassignor@yahoo.com. Our soccer referees are scheduled using a program called GameOfficials. When you are ready to begin working games you will need to log on to www.gameofficials.net and join the "Ken Flynn Assigning" group.

Please follow the instruction below:

NEW REFEREES (Refs who have never set up a GAMEOFFICIALS.NET account)

log into www.gameofficials.net

--click on "new official"

--enter our group number - **27**

--enter our access code - **refsoccer**

--enter your personal information

--click on MY AVAILABILITY and enter your available dates and times to work

--go to MY PREFERENCES - enter any team conflicts or note any specific requests

CURRENT REFEREES (WHO ARE ALREADY REGISTERED WITH GAMEOFFICIALS.NET)

--log into www.gameofficials.net

--click on "my assignor" and join the group by entering: --group number "27"

--access code "refsoccer"

Your First Year

Now that you have been on the field as a referee, gained valuable experience, learned how to blow the whistle properly, understand the importance of good positioning, communication, and applying the Laws of the Game, now what? Every year you will be required to take a re-certification test by attending a five hour course and taking a test.

You can go to www.gareferees.com to sign up for your re-certification classes.

Want to Advance?

So you've been doing recreational games and are ready for more challenging games. How do you get these games? Again you'll have to work with your local assignor who will get hold of your local assessor. The assessor will come to the field and evaluate your game and give you pointers on how to improve your game. The assessor is there to help you and take their feedback as constructive criticism.

That's what it takes to be a referee in a nutshell. Of course, the more games you do the more your confidence improves and games will seem easier.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information by emailing me at myrefassignor@yahoo.com or by phone at 678-548-3004.

Thank you, Ken Flynn

USSF Certified Referee Assignor