

How to Become a Referee



Being a referee is a fairly simple process - you take a test, you pass the test, you buy a uniform and you do your first game. Sounds easy. But of course nothing is that easy but we can help you get started. Here is what's involved in becoming a referee:

The Basic Referee Clinic

Find out where a clinic is to be held in your area by contacting the Midlothian Soccer Association, call the North Texas State Office and ask for Kathy, the referee administrator, or look on the North Texas web page. Clinics will be listed for your area and surrounding areas. Once you find one that is convenient to you, call

the person listed as the contact. Now that you have the first step out of the way things get better.

You will be attending a 16 1/2 hour course to become a referee but don't worry since you don't have to do it all at one time. Normally clinics are spread out over the course of 3-6 days depending on availability. Each class is called a session and you will have sessions A-F and usually a different instructor for each session but not always. These instructors will cover everything in the Laws of the Game plus some. At the end of the sessions you will take a test and make a score of 75 or better in order to register with USSF. If you score less than 75 all is not lost. You can retake the test at a later date but until you pass the test you cannot register or do games. Take the time to study before test date and take good notes during the classes.

The Uniform and Equipment

Now that you've passed the test and have registered with USSF it's 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 shoes. There are no particular shoes that we recommend only that you get a pair that won't cause blisters when you run and are comfortable. In addition to a uniform, you will need a watch, preferably one that counts down time. You'll need a whistle, a small book to keep score, a flipping coin, red and yellow cards and a set of flags. Now you ask yourself where do I get all this stuff. Not to worry. During the clinic your instructor will tell you where you can buy all this stuff.

Getting Games

Now that you've passed the test, bought your uniform and all the stuff, you'll need to talk to an assignor who will schedule your games. Not sure who your local assignor is - not to worry. Again your instructor will give you the name and phone number of the assignor for your local association. Or if you feel daring you can look on the North Texas web page under Referees to find out who to call.

Your First Year

Well you've been out on the fields for a year now and you've learned how to issue cards, deal with coaches and parents and suffered through the heat and cold. Now what. Every year you will be required to take a re-certification test and attend five hours of training. The training part you can usually get in your local referee association or you can attend the All Referee meeting held in Dallas in July. If you can make the All Referee meeting you'll get to hear new speakers, be eligible for door prizes and swap stories with fellow referees. See you there!

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. If you pass the physical, pass the written test and the referee committee approves, then you are a grade 7 referee. Congratulations! Now are you're ready to try and advance to grade 6, State referee? The process is pretty much the same but more intense and the referee committee will work with you to get you to the next level.

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. One thing to remember is that we all have a bad game from time to time so don't despair. With assessors and assignors helping you, these will be few and far between. Remember that if you have any questions, contact your local area administrator and if he/she cannot answer your questions, contact Kathy Sexton (kathy@ntxsoccer.org) at the State office or email Fred Hiler at fredhiler@hotmail.com, Referee Chairman.