



## 2026-2027 New Age Group FAQ

- **Who made the decision to switch to the new age group cut-off?**
  - US Club Soccer, US Youth Soccer, and the American Youth Soccer Organization, the three largest youth soccer organizations in the country, announced their new age group cut-off decision in June of 2025. Girls Academy and MLS Next Academy Division made their announcements to follow the new age group cut-off in fall of 2025.
- **Why was the decision made to switch from January 1<sup>st</sup> to August 1<sup>st</sup> as an age group cut-off?**
  - According to [US Club Soccer](#), there are two main reasons that this change was made:
    - An August 1<sup>st</sup> cut-off better aligns soccer age groups with school year ages. This maximizes the number of players who are able to play with their school-year peers. There is also evidence that this alignment helps increase the number of players both entering and staying in the sport.
    - An August 1<sup>st</sup> cut-off minimizes the number of “trapped” players. “Trapped” players are players that, due to age cut-offs, are part of a soccer age group older than their school year. These players face many challenges, including reduced competition and disrupted training, during multiple years of their youth soccer experience.
- **How can I tell what age group my player will be a part of next year?**
  - Please refer to the age matrix on the next page of this FAQ sheet.
- **Does it matter what age group I pick when I register my player this spring?**
  - Yes, unless your player qualifies for the exception listed below, Academy and Recreational players need to follow the age matrix when registering for the fall season, and Select players need to follow the matrix when registering for tryouts.
- **My player has an August birthday, and the age matrix has them playing with the grade below them. Will they be able to play with their grade level?**
  - Players with August birthdays will have the choice to play with their school year or stay with their age group. You will make this choice when registering for the fall season (Rec and Academy) or tryouts (Select).
  - Whatever choice the player makes is for the entire year as rosters will be set after registration (Rec and Academy) or tryouts (Select).
  - If a player is unhappy with their choice, they may change it for the 2027-2028 season.
  - EBU highly recommends having a discussion with your current coach prior to making this decision.
  - For incoming Freshmen only – if your August birthday allows you the choice to play on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade team (U14), and you choose that option, you will need to commit to a full year with your EBU team and forgo your Freshman year of high school soccer.
- **My player is very advanced for their age. Can they play up an age level?**
  - If your player is identified as a player who should play up, you will be contacted by the director of coaching. All decisions will be made by the coaching staff.
- **My player would like to play with their school year, but they are too old. Can they play down?**
  - Unfortunately, we are unable to make exceptions for players to play down an age level.

<b>2026-27 SEASON</b>	
Born between Aug 1, 2020 – July 31, 2022	<b><u>U-6</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020	<b><u>U-7</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2018 – July 31, 2019	<b><u>U-8</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2017 – July 31, 2018	<b><u>U-9</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2016 – July 31, 2017	<b><u>U-10</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2015 – July 31, 2016	<b><u>U-11</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2014 – July 31, 2015	<b><u>U-12</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014	<b><u>U-13</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2012 – July 31, 2013	<b><u>U-14</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2011 – July 31, 2012	<b><u>U-15</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2010 – July 31, 2011	<b><u>U-16</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2009 – July 31, 2010	<b><u>U-17</u></b>
Born between Aug 1, 2008 – July 31, 2009	<b><u>U-18</u></b>