



I completed the Grade 9
New Referee course.

WHAT NOW?



Each year, Oklahoma Soccer Association trains an average of 800 new referees. Of these 800, past years have shown that only around half will continue past that first year. It's not surprising that many don't return; it's obvious that sports officiating isn't right for every personality. What is surprising is that of the 400 referees who never register for a second year, dozens—maybe hundreds—never referee a single game because no club or assignor ever contacts them and they never make contact with any assignor. With the need for soccer referees growing every year in Oklahoma, every person who is willing to put forth their own money and time for the class and equipment deserves the opportunity to find out if being a soccer referee is right for him or her.

Here you'll find some tips and resources to help you break in and get established in your first year as a soccer referee.

Know and Use your Resources

US Soccer and OSA have many resources available for new referees:

[OKSoccer.com Referee Home Page](#)

[OK Soccer Referees Facebook Group](#)

[US Soccer Referee Home Page](#)

VIDEOS FOR NEW REFEREES FROM US SOCCER:

[Advice to New Referees: Getting Started](#)

[Advice to New Referees: Making a Good Impression](#)

[Advice to New Referees: The Pre-Game Conference](#)

[Advice to New Referees: Being the Referee](#)

[Advice to New Referees: Being an Assistant Referee](#)

[Advice to New Referees: After the Game](#)

Make Your Move!

If you're sitting on the couch waiting for a soccer game to come over...

Each club has a referee assignor who schedules the referees. The first thing you should do after completing your referee course is contact your home club's referee assignor. If you don't know who that is, visit the club's website or contact a board or staff member. Most assignors prefer email over phone calls and texts. Remember, for most assignors this is a second job or volunteer position, so allow two or three days to get a reply. If you don't hear from the assignor after a few days, don't give up, try again! If you try several times and still never get a reply...

Reach Out to One or More Assignors

Most new referees have a "home club" where they also play or coach. You may find it takes longer to break in or get noticed in a club that has a larger referee pool relative to its number of games. You are not limited to referee in any one club or for any one assignor. If you aren't getting replies or assignments from one assignor, reach out to other nearby assignors. The last thing anyone wants is for referees who want to go to work to be sitting at home on Saturday. If you need help locating or contacting a club or assignor, please email oksoccer@oksoccer.com

Make Yourself Available

Referee assignors, like everyone else, want to finish each job and then move on to the next. If you're never available to referee or don't reply to assignors when they try to contact you, after a few times they may stop trying altogether. The referees who answer "Yes!" most regularly are the ones who assignors call first. Being available more often than not can help propel referees to the top of assignors' lists.

HONOR YOUR COMMITMENTS

Nothing will get a referee dropped from an assignor's roster faster than failing to show up for an accepted assignment. While not as disruptive as a referee no-show, frequent or last-minute turnbacks will also damage how assignors perceive your reliability. A "turnback" is when you agree to an assignment (verbally, by text/email or Arbiter/GameOfficials), and then later tell the assignor that you can no longer officiate that match. Scheduling conflicts do arise and nearly everyone must turn back an assignment once in a while, but keep this as infrequent as possible and give the assignor as much notice as you can.

Club Tournaments

From Groundhog Day until Thanksgiving, you're practically guaranteed to find *at least* one club tournament somewhere in Oklahoma every weekend. These provide excellent opportunities to quickly gather game experience and make new connections in the referee community. In addition to the many competitive tournaments that are available to Grade 8 (and higher) referees, there are also dozens of recreational tournaments that can use Grade 9 referees. If you have a home club, give your local assignor a couple weeks' notice that you'll be out for a tournament so she or he can plan accordingly. The tournament environment for referees is often hurried and intense, so one or two seasons of experience is recommended.