

Youth Soccer Tournament Advice for New Team Managers

Okay, so you're a team manager looking for [youth soccer](#) tournament advice because your first event is in a couple of months, and you're overwhelmed by all the details you have to take care of. Don't worry. Planning your first trip to a soccer tournament can be pretty daunting. Here are nine tips that will help you keep your head straight and help your team have as enjoyable tournament experience as possible.

1. Our first piece of youth soccer tournament advice is to complete all entry requirements and make sure you understand exactly what documentation you will be required to furnish at the tournament. Don't show up on the morning of the first game, only to discover that you can't play without a signed and notarized copy of your roster.
2. If you are traveling outside your state association, be sure to apply for a travel permit from your own state association in a timely manner.
3. Make reservations for hotel and motel accommodations early. The tournament headquarters hotel usually is not the best choice, since there is almost always a lot of commotion at the headquarters. All of your players should stay at the same hotel, which is why you need to make your reservations early.
4. Make sure everyone has maps and directions to ALL fields. And make sure that you have the [cell phone numbers](#) of all parents and drivers. In this age of [GPS systems](#), it's easy to get complacent about field directions, but fields aren't like [office buildings](#). Unless they're part of a school or college, they often don't have logical street addresses. A well-run tournament will provide directions to all field locations. Spend some time at a [copier](#) machine making as many copies of these as you need and make sure all drivers are working off the same map.
5. Plan to take the following equipment at a minimum with you to every game, a [first aid kit](#), sun block, bug spray, [drinking water](#) jug, balls, and player ID cards.
6. Players will need a complete uniform, including an alternate color jersey, shoes, including alternate cleat style (maybe flats if any of the fields you're playing on are the kind of turf that requires them), extra dry socks (make that 2 pairs of extra dry socks), a blanket to wrap up in or sit on between games, and several changes of clean clothes.
7. Other things that you may find helpful are a video game with enough accessories to connect it with a hotel television and enough games to make it interesting. Be sure to ask what the hotel policy is about connecting this type of equipment when making your reservation.
8. Locate a laundromat close to the hotel, and take plenty of change and a supply of soap. That way you'll be able to clean the uniforms between games. Don't be tempted to rely on a washing machine that may be at the hotel. Several dozen other teams will likely have the same idea, and you may find yourself waiting in line to wash uniforms at 3:00am. Bring a bunch of safety pins so that each player's shorts and socks can be pinned to their jersey for easy identification. A clean dry uniform and dry socks can give a team an unbelievable lift.
9. Also, locate a good movie theater. This is absolutely the best way to keep a team occupied if you have a long break between games. Staying at the field will probably be too hot. Swimming in the hotel pool will cool players off but can be very tiring. A good movie, in an air conditioned theater will have them seated, calm and focused for two solid hours, giving them just the right preparation for a late afternoon or early evening game.