

Milwaukee Kickers Soccer Club

Competitive Soccer – Navigating Tryouts

Welcome to the Tryout Process

Tryouts can feel exciting, stressful, and sometimes overwhelming, for players and parents alike. This guide is designed to help families understand the purpose of tryouts with Milwaukee Kickers Soccer Club (MKSC), what to expect during the process, and how to best support your player.

At MKSC, tryouts are not about one day or one moment. They are a tool used to place players in the environment that best supports their development, confidence, and long-term enjoyment of the game.

What are tryouts?

Tryouts are structured evaluated sessions where coaches observe players in training and game-like environments.

- Purpose: To find appropriate team and level placement
- Focus: Skill, effort, attitude, and coachability
- Format: Multiple days when possible
- Outcome: Placement offers by age group and level

Pro Tip: Tryouts are about finding the right fit for each player's growth and development, not about labeling a player as “good” or “bad”.

MKSC Tryouts

Milwaukee Kickers is one club, but it is organized into multiple Regions across Southeastern Wisconsin. Each Region with competitive programming will host tryouts based on their Region and Coaching Director's philosophy that focuses on a player-centered, long-term developmental approach.

- Each region manages its own teams and team placements.
- Each region's Coaching Director and coaches will oversee the tryouts and the team placements.

- Each region will conduct tryouts, and the tryout structure will be set by the individual Region.

Pro Tip: If you are unsure about the Kickers Region, attend multiple tryouts! MKSC works together to help ensure team placements for all players.

What coaches are looking for

While technical ability matters for evaluating players, coaches evaluate on many different areas during tryouts. These are a few areas where evaluators will look at when determining the best team placement for your child:

- Comfort with the ball (dribbling, passing, receiving)
- Effort and work rate
- Willingness to try new things
- Attitude towards teammates and coaches
- Ability to listen and respond to instructions

Pro Tip: Coaches value players who keep going after mistakes.

What to expect at tryouts

Tryouts are designed to resemble normal training environments as much as possible. You should expect to see:

- Check-in and warm-ups
- Small-sided games and activities
- Expansion to larger game play
- Multiple coaches observing the tryouts

Pro Tip: Encourage your player to focus on effort and enjoyment rather than outcomes.

Common tryout questions

Will my child make a team?

Most players who attend tryouts are placed within the club at a level appropriate to their development. Placement may vary year by year. MKSC Regions work together to try and find a spot for all players who attend tryouts.

Can my child move teams later?

It's normally common the team you accept a spot on is the team where you will play for the program year (Fall-Spring). Player movement can happen as development changes, but it would be at the discretion of the Region and their programming.

What if my child is disappointed?

This is a normal part of competitive sports. Coaches and staff are available to help families understand placement decisions.

Pro Tip: Placement offers reflect current development, and not a players ceiling.

What to expect after tryouts

After tryouts are concluded, placement offers will be sent via Playmetrics. Families are given time to review and accept offers. Feedback may be available upon request. Families must accept and register in Playmetrics for their team placement to be finalized.

After navigating the tryout process, families can:

- Accept a placement offer
- Ask follow-up questions
- Consider recreational or alternative programming if appropriate

Key Contacts & Resources

- Tryouts: <https://www.mksc.org/programs/select-tryouts/>
- Competitive programming: <https://www.mksc.org/programs/competitive/>
- Club website: <https://www.mksc.org/>
- Regional contacts: <https://www.mksc.org/regions/>