



## What Is Sportsmanship?

Sportsmanship is defined as:

- playing fair
- following the rules of the game
- respecting the judgment of referees and officials
- treating opponents with respect

We define good sportsmanship as the "golden rule" (Matthew 7:12) of sports — in other words, treating the people you play with and against as you'd like to be treated yourself. You demonstrate good sportsmanship when you show respect for yourself, your teammates, and your opponents, for the coaches on both sides, and for the referees, judges, and other officials.

**Be advised that Conquerors League Soccer~Futsal Academy is based on respect for each other and Officials!**

- **Be courteous of others—("ROOT" MODEL is our philosophy, ROOT acronym stands for: Respect Officials, Opponents & Teammates)**

But sportsmanship isn't just reserved for the people on the field. Cheerleaders, fans, and parents also need to be aware of how they behave during competition. Sportsmanship is a style and an attitude, and it can have a positive influence on everyone around you.

### **Win or Lose, "Golden Rule of Sports" Helps You Get Through:**

In the last few years, taunting, trash-talking, gloating, and cheap shots have become all too common in sports. You've probably seen athletes who take their own successes too seriously, too. They celebrate a goal with a prolonged victory dance or constantly brag about their abilities. This is the exact opposite of what sportsmanship is all about. This kind of behavior might make

you feel tough or intimidating to an opponent, but keep in mind it can also cause you to lose the match. Plenty of games have been lost to penalties gathered from "unsportsmanlike conduct."

Everyone feels great when they win, but it can be just as hard to be a good sport when you've won a game as when you've lost one. Good sportsmanship takes maturity and courage — when you work really hard at a sport, it's not easy to admit you made a bad play or that someone has more skills than you. In competition — as in life — you may not always win but you can learn something from losing, too.

It's pretty tough to lose, so it definitely doesn't help matters if someone continues taunting you or your team after the competition is over. Sometimes it's hard to swallow your pride and walk on. But there's always the next match.

When you *do* lose — and it will happen — don't take it out on your opponent, blame the officials, or blame your team. Take it in stride. When you lose, lose with class. Being proud of how you performed, or at least being aware of things you need to improve for next time, is key.

When it comes to losing, good sportsmanship means congratulating the winners promptly and willingly. Also, it means accepting the game's outcome without complaint and without excuses, even if you sometimes might feel the referees made a few questionable calls.

When you win, the trick is to be a gracious and generous winner. Good sportsmanship means acknowledging victories without humiliating opponents, being quietly proud of success, and letting victories speak for themselves. Even if you win by a landslide, good sportsmanship means still finding ways to compliment your opponents.

### **Practicing "Golden Rule of Sports" Good Sportsmanship:**

So what does it take to demonstrate good sportsmanship in real-life situations? **Matthew 7:12**  
**The Golden Rule**

Here are some examples of things you can do:

- Learn as much as you can about your sport. Play by its rules. Show up for practice, work hard, and realize that on a team, everyone deserves a chance to play.
- Talk politely and act courteously toward everyone before, during, and after games and events. That includes your teammates, your opponents, your coaches and their coaches, the

officials presiding over the game, and even spectators (who can sometimes be loud about their opinions).

- Stay cool. Even if others are losing their tempers, it doesn't mean you have to. Remind yourself that no matter how hard you've practiced and played, it is, after all, just a game.
- Avoid settling disputes with violence. If you're in a difficult situation or someone's threatening you, seek help immediately from your coach or from an official. Remember, too, that if you respond with violence you could get penalized, which could hurt your chances of winning.
- Cheer your teammates on with positive statements — and avoid trash-talking the other team.
- Acknowledge and applaud good plays, even when someone on the other team makes them.
- When officials make a call, accept it gracefully even if it goes against you. Remember that referees may not be right every time — but they're people who are doing their best, just as you are.
- Whether you win or lose, congratulate your opponents on a game well played.

*“When thinking about sportsmanship, most people only think about the sport side of sportsmanship and not about the real everyday side. The reality is that sportsmanship is in anything and everything that we do both on and off the field. How do you respect anyone or anything without sportsmanship coming into play?”*

Good sportsmanship is the most important aspect of the game. Sometimes games will get intense, heated and personal; therefore, sportsmanship must be learned in order to be practiced in sticky situations. If athletes weren't reprimanded for unfit behavior, there would be no guidelines for others to follow. Of course there's talent and hard work, which are both very important parts of sports, but without sportsmanship and self-discipline, there would likely be chaos throughout various levels of play.

When athletes go “beyond the game,” they look outside of what it takes to win a game, but decide to be a good teammate, good opponent and good person. Everyone may have a tad bit different definition of good sportsmanship, but first-class sportsmanship all leads to the same goal of having clean, fun competition with the outcome of creating champions who excel both on and off the court.