



Checklist for Starting a New League

Your local disc organization (LDO) may be able to help with many of these steps, but it is helpful to know all that goes into organizing and running a successful new league.

1. Review [youth rules adaptations](#).
2. Evaluate whether you have a critical mass to start a league.
3. Review necessary volunteer and coach requirements, including NCSI background check and athlete protection training (SafeSport).
4. Determine the structure and audience of your league.
 - a. Will you run a school or non-school based league (club or recreational)?
 - b. What age divisions will you have?
 - c. Will the gender divisions be boys, girls or mixed?
 - d. Which field size, disc and rules adaptations will you implement?
 - e. How long will the season be? How long will each session be?
 - f. Will you have a teaching portion involved to aid beginners whether at the beginning of each session or prior to the league?
 - g. Will there be an end of season tournament? What will the format of the tournament be?
 - h. What is your backup plan in the event of inclement weather?
5. Develop a plan and vision for your league. This should include a short and long-term plan.
 - a. How competitive will the league be?
 - b. What will you do to recruit and retain players?
 - c. How can you strive to be more inclusive?
 - d. What will be your league day responsibilities?
6. Contact your local disc organization (LDO). Partnering with your LDO will broaden your participant reach, volunteer base, resources and potentially budget.
7. Secure insurance. USA Ultimate provides insurance and liability coverage for events. Requirements include but are not limited to, the rostering of all participants, purchasing memberships for all participants, and collecting signed waivers from all participants (or guardians of minors). Apply [here](#).
8. If you're starting a new youth league, apply [here](#) for funding and resources.
9. Find a field. Reach out to schools, park and recs, community centers and churches.
 - a. Complete facility use form.
10. Establish a safety action plan for your facility. Familiarize yourself with risk management and insurance issues.
11. Establish fees and a sustainable budget.
12. Recruit volunteers and coaches that will be engaging, committed and trustworthy.
 - a. Recruit coaches that are child-centered, inclusive and make it fun and safe.
 - b. You'll need at least 1 person to handle registration and a site representative to set up fields and water and handle any issues. Other volunteer positions include ordering



discs and jerseys, marketing/communications, social coordinator and competition advisor. Read more on engaging volunteers [here](#).

13. Be sure all coaches have completed the USA Ultimate Waiver and SafeSport training and received the green light for the NCSI background check. Encourage coaches to watch the free Coach Membership videos in their [USA Ultimate member homepage](#). If possible, host an in-person [Coaching Development Program \(CDP\) clinic](#).
14. Secure equipment for your league, including cones, discs, jerseys, water jugs, water, tables, medical kit, pens, scoreboards, etc.
15. Make sure your website is set up with registration, payment method, contact info, basic rules, location, etc.
16. Meet with primary volunteers and coaches prior to the first session.
 - a. Describe the league's plan and vision. Outline job descriptions. Set expectations, while listening to volunteer needs. Thank them for their time and effort. Check-in with them regularly throughout the season.
 - b. Establish a safe, healthy, supportive and instructional environment.
17. Use various methods to promote your event.
 - a. Email listservs, coaches, parents, etc.
 - b. Add it to the LDO website and local websites that showcase event listings.
 - c. Promote via social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
 - d. Put flyers up around town - schools, community centers, grocery stores, coffee shops, libraries, gyms, farmer's markets, pools, Parks & Rec centers, etc.
 - e. Note- Families with sibling pairs can help raise participant numbers quickly.
18. Teach and emphasize the importance of Spirit of the Game to players. Consider utilizing spirit awards to celebrate good spirit and implementing spirit scoring and spirit circles for players to reflect and improve on all aspects of Spirit of the Game.
19. Create and maintain a participant and parent contact list. Send your contacts a week of email and a periodic newsletter with league updates.
20. Throughout the season, build positive relationships with parents by maintaining open lines of communication, educating them on the sport and explaining how their kids can get the most out of ultimate. You may even meet someone interested in saving you time and effort by volunteering, coaching or starting a new team!
21. Be flexible, organized and a good communicator. Always find ways to improve the participant's experience and self-reflect. But most importantly have fun!
22. Post-league, examine the budget, have a post-season meeting with volunteers and coaches and plan for next year. Email participants with a recap and post-league survey. Throughout the year, promote future playing opportunities to them.