



SOCCER RULE BOOK

Fall 2009

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	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Ages	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
Length of Game	4 (12) minute periods	4 (13) minute periods	4 (15) minute periods	4 (15) minute periods
Period Break	2 minutes	2 minutes	2 minutes	2 minutes
Halftime Break	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
Players on Field	7v7	8v8	8v8	8v8
Game Ball	4	4	5	5
Goal Size	12' x 6'6"	18' x 6'	18' x 6'	18' x 6'
Field Size	135' x 110'	225' x 145'	225' x 145'	225' x 145'

Coaches & Parents: IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ THIS!

The referee's decision is FINAL. End of story. Please do not argue with the referees regarding ANY calls or the Offside Rule (even the best linemen in the world miss this call). If you feel like a referee is consistently missing calls or making calls incorrectly, then we ask that you bring your concern to the SOAR Referee Manager for the Fall 2009 season, Daryel Person. He will be on the field for games on Saturdays and Fridays during the season. We welcome your feedback in this manner! We will then address the issue with the referee. Let's keep each other accountable to this policy. Thank you.

For ALL Divisions (Ages 7-18)

- All players must play an equal amount of time at each game.
- No jewelry allowed at practice or games (including earrings). For games especially please make sure your players remove all bracelets, watches, rings, necklaces, earrings and piercings of any kind.
- Shinguards must be worn during all practices and games. No metal-studded cleats are allowed.
- "OPEN PRACTICE" POLICY:
 - There will not be any "open practices" this season.
 - Players can only practice with the team on which they are rostered.
- Sportsmanship
 - Goal scorers will shake the hand of the defending goalkeeper after each goal as a sign that both made attempts to give it their best effort.
- Goalkeeper Safety
 - A goalie has possession when a) They have 2 hands on the ball or b) The ball is being held against his/her body. Only 1 hand on the ball does NOT imply possession by rule except when they have it with one hand against their own body (see b. above).
 - In order to protect our goalies, any time that a goalie has what a Referee deems to be possession of the ball, the referee may call attacking players off or they may call an infraction on the attacking player(s). Players are not allowed to charge the goalie or kick the ball if the goalie has possession.
 - A verbal warning will be issued by the referee to any player who commits an infraction of this goalie rule. On the second infraction by the same player, a Yellow Card can be given. (A Yellow Card may be issued upon the first infraction depending upon the severity of the foul.)
 - If a goalie dives at the feet of an oncoming offensive player in an effort to block an attempted shot, no warning should be issued to the offensive player for violating the goalie protection rule. In this instance, the goalie has created the situation, not the offensive player and depending on the situation the Referee may deem the play fair on both accounts or a foul could be issued to either player.
- Handballs
 - A handball is when a player that is not a goalkeeper handles the ball with any part of the arm from the shoulder to your fingers.
 - When a handball takes place, ask yourself these two questions: Did the ball go to the hand? OR Did the hand go to the ball?
 - **If the ball went to the hand, it is not a handball.**
 - If the hand goes to the ball, this is a handball and should be restarted as a Direct Kick. For more specific ruling in regards to Direct Kicks, please see Page 6.

FRESHMEN Division (Ages 7-9):

- Substitutions can only be made with the permission of the Referee and can only be made between periods, at half time, and/or at the mid-point of each period of the game.
- Goalkeepers can only use hands inside the designated penalty box area.
- **No goalie coaches will be allowed on the end-line. Coaches or parents may only coach the goalie from the sideline.**
- The Offside Rule is NOT called. However, players should be discouraged from cherry picking or advancing too far up the field for an unfair advantage.
- Goal Kicks can be taken by the goalkeeper or a field player. Opposing team must stand at least one yard outside the penalty box. Defensive players can be anywhere, in the Penalty Box or out. However, after the goal kick is taken, no player can touch the ball until it fully crosses the Penalty Box line. (Referees should back the opposing team's players up before ball is kicked.)
- Defenders may kick the ball back to the goalkeeper and the goalkeeper can pick it up without penalty.
- No penalty kicks will be allowed. If a foul or handball occurs inside the box then the ball should be moved outside the box nearest to the foul and an Indirect Free Kick should be issued.
- Players will be allowed to take only Indirect Kicks. No Direct Kicks will be issued in the Freshmen Division. For more specific ruling in regards to Direct and Indirect Kicks, please see Pages 6 and 7.
- Players will be allowed two tries for a proper throw in before it is given to the opposing team. This rule applies throughout entire season.
 - Both feet must be in contact with the ground on or behind the touchline.
 - Must use both hands (unless a physical impairment would limit use to one hand) and deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous movement.
- No Slide Tackling.
- No overtimes will be allowed. Tie games will stand as a draw.

SOPHOMORE / JUNIOR / SENIOR Divisions (Ages 10-18):

- Slide Tackling is NOT allowed. A yellow card can be issued by the referee to the player if he/she commits an infraction of this “No Slide Tackle” rule. For more specific ruling in regards to Yellow Cards, please see Page 9.
- SUBSTITUTIONS are restricted only by the following...
 - Either team may sub:
 - After a goal is scored
 - Before a goal kick
 - When play is stopped by the referee for an injury
 - A red/yellow card is issued
 - Only the team with possession may sub:
 - On a throw-in
 - On a corner kick
 - SUBSTITUTIONS ARE NOT TO BE MADE UNTIL PERMISSION IS GRANTED BY THE REFEREE. PLAYER WAITING TO ENTER THE FIELD MUST WAIT UNTIL THE PLAYER THEY ARE REPLACING IS OFF THE FIELD.
- The Offside Rule will be called. For more specific ruling in regards to Offsides, please see Page 11.
- Red / Yellow Cards can be given. For more specific ruling in regards to Red/Yellow Cards, please see Pages 9 and 10.
- Throw-Ins: An illegal throw-in will result in an immediate turnover to the opposing team.
 - Both feet must be in contact with the ground on or behind the touchline.
 - Must use both hands (unless a physical impairment would limit use to one hand) and deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous movement.
- The ball is not out until the entire ball has crossed the vertical plane of the outside of the line. It must travel all the way across the line to be called out of bounds, or to be called a GOAL. Again, the Referee’s decision is final.
- In the event of a goal kick, the ball kicked must travel across the penalty box line before any player (defense or offense) is allowed to touch the ball. In the case of a player touching it before it crosses the line then retake the goal kick.
- Penalty Kicks (PKs) will be allowed.
- A single 5 minute overtime will be played for games ending in a tie after regulation is over. All overtimes are Golden Goal (1 goal wins the game and it ends immediately even if there is still time left). Again, only 1 overtime period is played. Tie games after one overtime period will stand as a draw.

DIRECT FREE KICKS

Direct Kick Fouls - For which the other team receives a "direct free kick" (meaning a goal can be scored by kicking the ball straight into the goal) or a "penalty kick" ("PK") if the foul occurs within the Penalty Box (Note: It doesn't matter whether the ball was in the Penalty Box or not; what matters is where the foul was committed). There are 10 direct kick fouls. The rules say that the referee should call a foul for numbers 1 thru 6 if he believes they are committed in a manner he considers "careless, reckless or using excessive force":

1. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent. Accidentally kicking an opponent while tackling the ball is not a foul unless it was careless, reckless, or there was excessive force. If a player slide tackles from the front, it will be considered at least "dangerous play" (which is an indirect kick foul), or kicking, or tripping, or "unsporting behavior", **even if the ball is contacted**, since it would at the least be reckless or dangerous.
2. Tripping or attempting to trip an opponent (if careless, reckless or using excessive force)
3. Charging into an opponent (the goalkeeper can also be called for this if his action is careless, reckless or uses excessive force)
4. Striking or attempting to strike an opponent (if careless, reckless or using excessive force)
5. Pushing an opponent, including the goalkeeper (if careless, reckless or using excessive force)
6. Jumping at an opponent in a careless or reckless manner or using excessive force (this includes jumping for a header if an opponent is carelessly or recklessly bumped, and jumping at the goalkeeper)
7. Blatant holding or pulling (including holding clothing, using any part of the body to hold an opponent & "Sandwiching")
8. Making contact with an opponent before touching the ball when tackling an opponent to gain possession of the ball (Note: it is always a foul if the tackler contacts the ballhandler before touching the ball. However, it can still be a direct kick foul if the ball is touched first but the tackler was "careless, reckless, or used excessive force" and was judged to have kicked, tripped, charged or jumped at the ballhandler. Or, if the Referee believes the tackler played in a "dangerous manner", an indirect kick can be awarded)
9. Spitting at an opponent, even if it doesn't hit the opponent (this is grounds for an immediate Yellow Card and at your discretion, possibly a Red Card)
10. Deliberately handling the ball

INDIRECT FREE KICKS

Indirect Kick Fouls - For which the other team receives an "**indirect free kick**" (meaning a goal only counts if another player touches the ball before it enters the goal). The indirect free kick is taken from where the offense occurred. There are 2 types of indirect kick fouls:

a. Four that apply to all players:

1. **"Dangerous Play"** (or playing in a dangerous manner) is any action by a player that in the judgment of the Referee is dangerous to himself or to another player and that isn't a "direct kick foul" such as tripping. Examples would be a high kick when an opponent is nearby, or if a player tries to head a low ball that an opponent is trying to kick, then the player who is putting himself in danger would be guilty of dangerous play. Another example would be any action that might endanger the goalkeeper within the Penalty Box. If the goalkeeper and an opponent both go for a loose ball, the Referee will tend to favor the goalkeeper if there is a collision. It isn't necessary for someone to be hurt for dangerous play to be called. For example, slide tackling with spikes high would be dangerous play, even if the opponent isn't contacted. However, a dangerous act (such as a high kick) isn't "dangerous play" unless an opponent is nearby.
2. **"Impeding the Progress of an Opponent"**. Generally, a player cannot use his body to impede another player's movements, even if it is not deliberate. This can be called if a player is not within "playing distance" of the ball (i.e., 3 feet) and block's an opponent's movement or screens an opponent from the ball. However, if a player is within playing distance & able to play the ball (meaning not laying on the ground), the player can legally screen an opponent from the ball. (You usually see this when a ball is going out of bounds & the player whose team will get the throw-in screens the opponent so the opponent can't save the ball). Impeding the progress of an opponent used to be called "obstruction". The rule also applies to "innocently" impeding the goalkeeper by standing in front of him when he has the ball.
3. **Preventing the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands.** A player who attempts to prevent the Goalkeeper from putting the ball into play by standing directly in front of the Goalkeeper can be called for breaking this rule or for "unsporting behavior", in which case both a Yellow Card & an indirect kick would be awarded.
4. **Any time a Yellow or Red Card is shown & a direct kick isn't awarded** (e.g., for "unsporting behavior", "dissent", persistently breaking the rules, and offensive or threatening language)

b. Four indirect kick fouls that only apply to the goalkeeper and only if committed inside the Penalty Box (the goalkeeper is treated like a regular field player when he is outside the Penalty Box -- the Penalty Box includes the line that defines the Box, so if the ball is on the line it is still within the Penalty Box):

1. Controlling the ball with his hands for more than 6 seconds before releasing it from his possession (releasing it can include throwing it, kicking it or dropping it to the ground and then kicking or dribbling it. Once released, it is "live"). (Notice that this only applies to the time he actually has possession of the ball, and not to when he might have first touched it by blocking a shot).
2. Touching the ball with hands after it is deliberately kicked to the Goalkeeper by a teammate. (Note: It is okay to pick up an accidentally kicked ball, such as a miss-kick, or a pass from a teammate that isn't "kicked" but is made using the head, chest, knee, etc.).
3. Touching the ball with his hands after he has received it directly on a throw-in from a teammate (i.e., the goalkeeper can't pick up a throw-in from a teammate).

4. Intentionally touching the ball with his hands after he has released it from his possession and before it has touched another player (e.g., dropping the ball, dribbling it and then picking it back up is not allowed -- however, if he accidentally dropped it, it might be okay to pick it back up, the decision would be up to the Referee). Read #2 and #3 above. If the Goalkeeper "possesses" the ball and "releases" it, then he can only handle it again after an opponent touches it, or if it is accidentally kicked back or headed or chested back by a teammate. He can't pick it up if a teammate has intentionally kicked or thrown it to him. Notice that this rule only applies if he actually has "possession" of the ball, and not, for example, if he blocks a shot with his hands and then picks up the ball to "control" it. So, the important words here are "possession" and "released" -- under this rule just touching the ball isn't the same thing as having "possession" of the ball. However, in terms of protecting the Goalkeeper's safety, some referees will consider the Goalkeeper to have the ball under his control if he even has one finger on it -- this is to discourage attackers from trying to kick the ball out of the Keeper's hands.

YELLOW CARD INFRACTIONS (Sophomores and above)

1. "Unsporting Behavior" - this includes hard fouls; holding an opponent or deliberately handling the ball for the purpose of preventing an opponent from gaining possession of the ball; faking an injury; saying things that are designed to confuse or distract an opponent; harassment (such as jumping around, shouting or making gestures to intentionally distract an opponent; jumping in front of a corner kick, free kick or throw-in; worrying the goalkeeper or trying to prevent him from putting the ball into play; & adopting a threatening posture), gaining an unfair advantage by leaning on, climbing on the back of, or holding a teammate or the goal; blatant cases of holding and pulling an opposing player or his uniform; any action designed to deceive the Referee ("diving" to get a foul called)
2. Dissent by word or actions **(This includes foul language, cussing, taunting, trash talking and/or disagreeing with the referee)**
3. **Trying to prevent the goalkeeper from putting the ball in play in any way**
4. Persistently breaking the rules
5. Delaying the restart of play
6. Defenders failing to stay the proper distance away from the kicker on a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
7. Entering or re-entering the field without the referee's permission
8. Deliberately leaving the field without the referees permission

A player who receives 2 Yellow Cards is given a Red Card & ejected. FIFA rules do not require a player to leave the field for the first yellow card. However, some leagues' rules do. **If a player in SOAR receives a Yellow Card, then they are required to leave the field. Another player may be substituted for them and they may return to the game at the next legal substitution point.**

RED CARD INFRACTIONS (Sophomores and above)

Red Card - A player **must** be shown a Red Card and "sent off" (i.e., made to leave the field) for the 7 offenses listed below. A player shown a "Red Card" & sent off may not be replaced during that game (**i.e., his team must play a player "short" for the rest of the game; however, in SOAR a player may be replaced if he is ejected for receiving a second Yellow Card**). The 7 offenses for which a player may be shown a Red Card and sent off are:

1. Serious Foul Play (includes any use of excessive force or brutality against an opponent when challenging for the ball. Examples include a dangerous slide tackle from behind, or an "over the top tackle" in which a player raises his foot so the cleats could hit a player, or a two footed tackle that takes down the opponent. FIFA has broadened this definition by saying that "Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, from the side or from behind using one or both legs, with excessive force and endangering the safety of an opponent is guilty of serious foul play.)
2. Violent conduct
3. Spitting at or on anyone
4. Deliberately touching the ball with a hand in order to prevent a goal or to deny an obvious goal scoring opportunity (such as to prevent a "Breakaway".... this does not apply to the goalkeeper within his own Penalty Box)
5. Fouling an opponent to prevent an obvious goal scoring opportunity (e.g., holding to stop a breakaway)
6. Using offensive, insulting or threatening language and/or gestures
7. Or receiving a second yellow card in one game.

OFFSIDES (Sophomores and above)

What makes the offside rule especially complicated is that a player can be in an "offside position" without being offside. Two things are necessary to be "offside":

1st - The player must be in an "offside position" at the **moment** the ball is "played" by a teammate. To be in an "offside position", a player must be on the opponent's half of the field & closer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball & the second-last defender. A player is **not** in an offside position if he is on his own half of the field (i.e. the half his goalkeeper is on), or even with the second-to-last defender or the last 2 defenders. (The goalkeeper is usually the last defender, or one of the last two, but he might not be; the rules just refer to the last 2 defenders & don't mention the goalkeeper). This is often difficult to call. (For example, if a player is even with the Second Last Defender & thereby in an "onside position" but runs past the Second Last Defender a split second after his teammate makes a through pass. In this example, the player is not offside because he was in an onside position at the moment the ball was played.)

2nd - The player must be involved in "active play" by either:

- gaining an advantage by being in an offside position, or
- interfering with play, or
- interfering with an opponent

For example, if a player is in an "offside position" but not involved in the play, he would not be "offside". This can be a tough call & can be very judgmental. For example, what if the "on-ball attacker" is to the right of the goal but a teammate is in an "offside position" to the left of the goal? You can argue that the teammate wasn't involved in the play, but you can also argue that he distracted the goalkeeper because the goalkeeper had to worry about the possibility of a crossing pass & therefore the attacking team "gained an advantage by being in an offside position", in which case the teammate was "offside". In this case, the Referee's decision might depend on whether he felt the Goalkeeper was influenced by the player in the offside position. Obviously, it is a very subjective decision.

The penalty for Offside is that an **Indirect Free Kick** is awarded to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the offside occurred.

Special Cases Where Offside Is Not Called: A player is **not offside** if he receives the ball directly from a goal kick, throw-in or corner kick, even if he is in an offside position; however, once touched, the offside rule starts and if it is then played to a player in an "offside position", offside may be called. (**Note that the offside rule does apply on "free kicks"**). A player is also **not offside** if he passes the ball backward, even if doing so leaves him in an "offside position". However, if he is in an offside position and the ball is played returned to him by a teammate (e.g., a wall pass), then he can be called offside.