

Rules of the Game - Outdoor Soccer [abridged]



I. Field

= Maximum size 80yds x 120yds.

II. Ball

= u9-u12 Size 4. u13 Size 5 [10-14 psi].

III. Number of Players

= 8-11 per team on the field.

IV. Player Equipment

= The correct home/away jersey, shorts, and socks must be worn by all players on the field.

= No jewelry may be worn on the field [e.g. bracelets, earrings, necklaces, rings, watches, etc.].

= No metal may be on the bottom of the shoes.

= Appropriately-sized shin guards must be worn.

V. Referees

= One with a whistle [in the middle of play]. May stop play.

= Two with whistles [one on each half of the field, in play and even with the second to last defender]. May stop play.

VI. Assistant Referees

= Two without whistles [one on each half of the field, out of bounds and even with the second to last defender]. May not stop play.

= One without a whistle [at the half line]. May not stop play.

VII. Duration of the Game

= Maximum 45min. per half.

VIII. Start of Play

= Attacking direction and first possession are determined by a coin toss before the start of the match.

= Play begins as a direct free kick [that must go forward] from the center circle at the beginning of each period and after goals.

IX. Ball In and Out of Play

= Whenever the ball completely crosses a goal line [goal, corner kick, or goal kick] or touchline [throw-in] either on the ground or in the air.

X. Scoring [Goal]

= Whenever the ball completely and legally crosses the end line between the goal posts and beneath the crossbar [goals are a maximum 8' x 24']. Whichever team scores more goals wins the match.

XI. Off-Side

= Whenever an attacking player is closer than the second to last opponent [goalkeeper included] and that opponent's goal line at the exact moment the ball is played toward that attacking player by one of his teammates [a player should not be called for off-side if no pass/shot is made or if he is farther from the goal line than the ball when it is played to him]. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

XII. Fouls

= Whenever a player elbows, heads, kicks, knees, punches, pushes, slaps, spits on/toward, or trips an opponent [foul]. Whenever a player tackles an opponent before making clean contact with the ball [foul][if the ball is played first, and a player is then tackled, there is no foul, and side by side, shoulder to shoulder/hip to hip contact within playing distance of the ball is also allowed]. A direct free kick is awarded to the fouled player's team. The referee may allow play to continue if the fouled player's team maintains an advantage without the free kick [advantage].

= Whenever a player allows his teammate to gain possession of the ball by stepping into the path of an opponent [obstruction]. An indirect free kick is awarded to the obstructed player's team.

= Whenever a player puts himself or another player in danger without actually making contact with anyone - kicking at a ball above the waist or attempting to play the ball while on the ground [dangerous play]. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

= Whenever a player deliberately plays the ball with his arm/hand below the shoulder while the ball is in play [hand ball][hands may only be used deliberately by goalkeepers, for a throw-in, to set a free kick, or to give the ball to an official/opponent during a stoppage in play]. A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

= A goalkeeper may use his hands within the goal box or penalty box on any ball played by an opponent or any ball played by the head or chest of a teammate [he may not use his hands if the ball is deliberately played toward him by the foot or leg of a teammate, or an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team], and he may move freely for a short period of time [generally 6 seconds] within the goal box or penalty box while the ball is in his hands [once the ball is released, and the goalkeeper plays it with his foot/leg, he may not handle the ball again until an opponent touches it, or an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team].

= Bookings - cards are shown to players who have exhibited unsportsmanlike conduct [any act that is deliberately disrespectful or dangerous]. A Yellow Card is a warning [the player must immediately exit the field but may reenter at the next opportunity to make a substitution]. A Red Card [or two Yellow Cards in the same match] results in an ejection [that player's team must play minus one field player for the remainder of the match, and the ejected player must be suspended for the next match].

XIII. Free Kicks

= Whenever a foul is committed by one team, a free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the foul [no players from the team that committed the foul may be within 10yds of the ball once the referee has determined the distance, but those players may attempt to win the ball once it has been played from its resting position by an opponent]. Possession is given as a direct free kick [a player may score directly from the spot of the foul] or an indirect free kick [two players must touch the ball before a goal may be scored]. The player who takes the free kick may not touch the ball again until another player touches it, or an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

= A drop ball [the referee drops the ball between two players from opposing teams] is given whenever play is stopped but no foul was committed [e.g. player injury, weather delay, referee indecision, etc.].

XIV. Penalty Kicks

= Whenever a foul is committed by a player in his own goal box or penalty box, a direct free kick is awarded to the fouled player's team from 12yds directly in front of the goal, and only the goalkeeper may defend the initial shot [other players may enter the penalty box to attack and defend after the ball is played from its resting position].

XV. Throw-In

= Whenever the ball is played out of bounds over the touchline by one team, the opposing team is awarded a throw-in from the spot where the ball crossed the boundary [official technique - both hands on opposite sides the sides of the ball, the ball brought from behind the head directly over the head in one motion, both feet must be touching the ground out of bounds when the ball is released]. The player who takes the throw-in may not touch the ball again until another player touches it, or an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

XVI. Goal Kick

= Whenever the ball is played out of bounds over the goal line by an attacking team, the defending team is awarded a direct free kick from inside their own goal box [no player from either team may play the ball until it leaves the goal box and penalty box].

XVII. Corner Kick

= Whenever the ball is played out of bounds over the goal line by a defending team, the attacking team is awarded a direct free kick from the corner of the field where the end line meets the touchline.