

## **Laws of the Game**

(For more detailed descriptions visit- [www.fifa.com/worldfootball/lawsofthegame.html](http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/lawsofthegame.html))

### **Law 1: The Field of Play**

Matches may be played on grass or artificial turf. Color of the artificial turf must be green. The field of play must be rectangular in shape and have lines. The two longer boundary lines are called the touch lines and the two shorter boundary lines are called the end lines. The field is divided in half by the halfway line which connects to the touch lines. There are two penalty boxes on either end of the field. These boxes are 18-yards away from the end lines. There is also a penalty spot for penalty kicks to be taken from. There are flags in each corner of the field and arc lines in each of these corners to signify where a corner kick can be taken from. Goals, consisting of two posts and a crossbar, must be centered on each end line. Nets can be attached to the goals as long as they are properly attached and do not interfere with the goalkeeper.

### **Law 2: The Ball**

The ball must be spherical in shape and be made of leather or some other suitable material.

### **Law 3: The Number of Players**

A game consists of two teams with no more than eleven players. A game may not be played if there are less than seven players. The referee must be notified before a substitute can enter the field. They must also inform the referee if a goalkeeper is being substituted. If the referee is not informed of these substitutes, the players concerned will be cautioned.

### **Law 4: The Players' Equipment**

A player must not wear anything that may endanger himself or others around them. A player must wear a jersey, shorts, shinguards, and footwear. The two teams must distinguish themselves from the other team they are playing. If a referee sees that a player is not following one of these rules, the player is asked to leave the field and not return until the problem is fixed. The player must ask for the referee's permission to come back on the field, otherwise the player will be cautioned.

### **Law 5: The Referee**

Each match played is controlled by a referee who has the full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game.

### **Law 6: The Assistant Referees**

There may be two appointed assistant referees. Each of their responsibilities is to control the match with accordance to the Laws of the Game.

**Law 7: The Duration of the Match**

There will be two 45 minute halves. The players are entitled to having a half-time interval to rest. The amount of time for half-time can be altered on consent from the referee. The referee also has the discretion of adding time at the end of each half due to substitutions, injured players, wasting time, and any other occurrence. If a penalty kick is awarded and time expires, the match is extended in order for the penalty kick to be completed. An abandoned match is replayed unless otherwise specified.

**Law 8: The Start and Restart of Play**

At the start of a game, a coin is tossed and the winning team gets to decide which goal to defend. That team will also get the ball for the second-half kick off. The losing team gets the ball for the first-half kick off. Before the second-half begins, the teams switch ends and defend the opposite goal. There is a kick-off at the beginning of the match, after a goal, at the beginning of the second-half, and at the beginning of each extra-time period (where applicable). Each team's players must be on their own half and the ball must be stationary on the center mark. The ball is in play once the referee has blown his whistle and the ball is kicked and moves forward. The player that initially kicked the ball must not touch it again until another player has touched it. After a goal is scored, the opposing team takes the kick-off. If, while the ball is still in play, the referee must stop the game, the game is restarted with a drop ball where the ball was located when the play was stopped. Play resumes when the ball hits the ground.

**Law 9: The Ball In and Out of Play**

The ball is out of play when it has crossed the whole line. If any part of the ball is touching the line, whether in the air or on the ground, then it is still in play. The ball is also out of play when the referee has stopped the game. The ball is in play when it rebounds off a post, crossbar, or corner flag and remains in the field of play.

**Law 10: The Method of Scoring**

A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses over the goal line. If the ball is touching any of the goal line, whether in the air or on the ground, it is not a goal. The game is won by scoring more goals than your opponent. If there is an equal amount of goals or no goals at all, the game is a draw.

**Law 11: Offside**

A player is offside if they are nearer to the opponents' goal than both the ball and the second to last defender. A player is not in an offside position if they are on their own half of the field, are level with the second to last opponent, or they are level with the last two opponents. A player is only offside if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, by interfering with play, interfering with an opponent, or is gaining an advantage by being in that position. There is no offside on a goal kick, throw-in, or a corner kick. When an offside decision is awarded by the referee, the other team takes an indirect free-kick at the spot of infringement.

## **Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct**

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges at an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately (with exception for the Goalkeeper within his penalty area)

Any of these offences results in a direct free kick at the spot of infringement. A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above ten offences occurs in the penalty area.

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:

- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent
- Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball with his hands
- Commits any other offence not mentioned in Law 12.

An indirect free kick is also awarded inside the penalty area if the goalkeeper:

- Controls the ball with his hands for more than six seconds
- Touches the ball again with his hands after releasing it
- Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate
- Touches the ball with his hands after he has received it from a throw-in directly from a teammate

An indirect free kick is taken directly where the infringement occurred.

**Law 13: Free Kicks**

Free kicks are either direct or indirect. If a direct free kick is kicked into an opponent's goal, a goal is awarded. If a direct free kick is kicked in a team's own goal, a corner is awarded to the opposing team. An indirect free kick is shown by the referee raising his arm straight above his head and keeping it there until the kick has been taken and it touched another player. A goal off of an indirect free kick can only be awarded if it touches another player before entering the goal. If an indirect free kick is taken and goes directly into the opponent's goal with touching another player, a goal kick is awarded. If an indirect free kick is taken and goes directly into a team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team. If any free kick is awarded, the opposing team must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.

**Law 14: The Penalty Kick**

A penalty kick is awarded when a team commits any of the ten direct free kick offences, inside their own penalty area, while the ball is still in play. A goal can be scored from a penalty kick and additional time will be added so a penalty kick can be completed. The ball must be placed on the penalty area, the kicker must be identified, the goalkeeper must stay on the goal line until the ball has been kicked, and all other players must be outside the penalty area until the kick has been taken. The kicker must kick the ball forward and may not touch it again until it has touched another player.

**Law 15: The Throw-In**

A throw-in is a method of restarting play and is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when it went out of bounds either on the ground or in the air. A goal can not be scored from a throw-in. The person throwing the ball in must face the field, have both feet either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line, hold the ball with both hands, deliver the ball from behind and over the head, and must throw the ball in from where the ball went out of bounds. All opponents must stand at least 2 yards away from the thrower. The ball is then in play when it enters the field and can not be touched again by the thrower until another player has touched it.

**Law 16: The Goal Kick**

The goal kick is a method of restarting play. It is awarded when the whole ball crosses over the goal line, after being touched last by a player of the attacking team, and a goal has not been scored. The ball is kicked anywhere within the goal area and everyone else must stand outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area and must not be touched by the kicker until it is touched by another player. If a ball is not kicked directly out of the area on a goal kick, the kick is retaken.

**Law 17: Corner kick**

The corner kick is a method of restarting play. A corner kick is awarded when the whole ball crosses over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player on the defending team, and a goal has not been scored. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick but only on the opposing team. The ball must be placed inside the corner arc, the corner flag must not be moved, opponents must remain at least 10 yards from the corner, the corner must be taken by a player from the attacking team, the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves, and finally the ball may not be touched again by the player who kicked it until another player has touched it.