

IFAB[®]

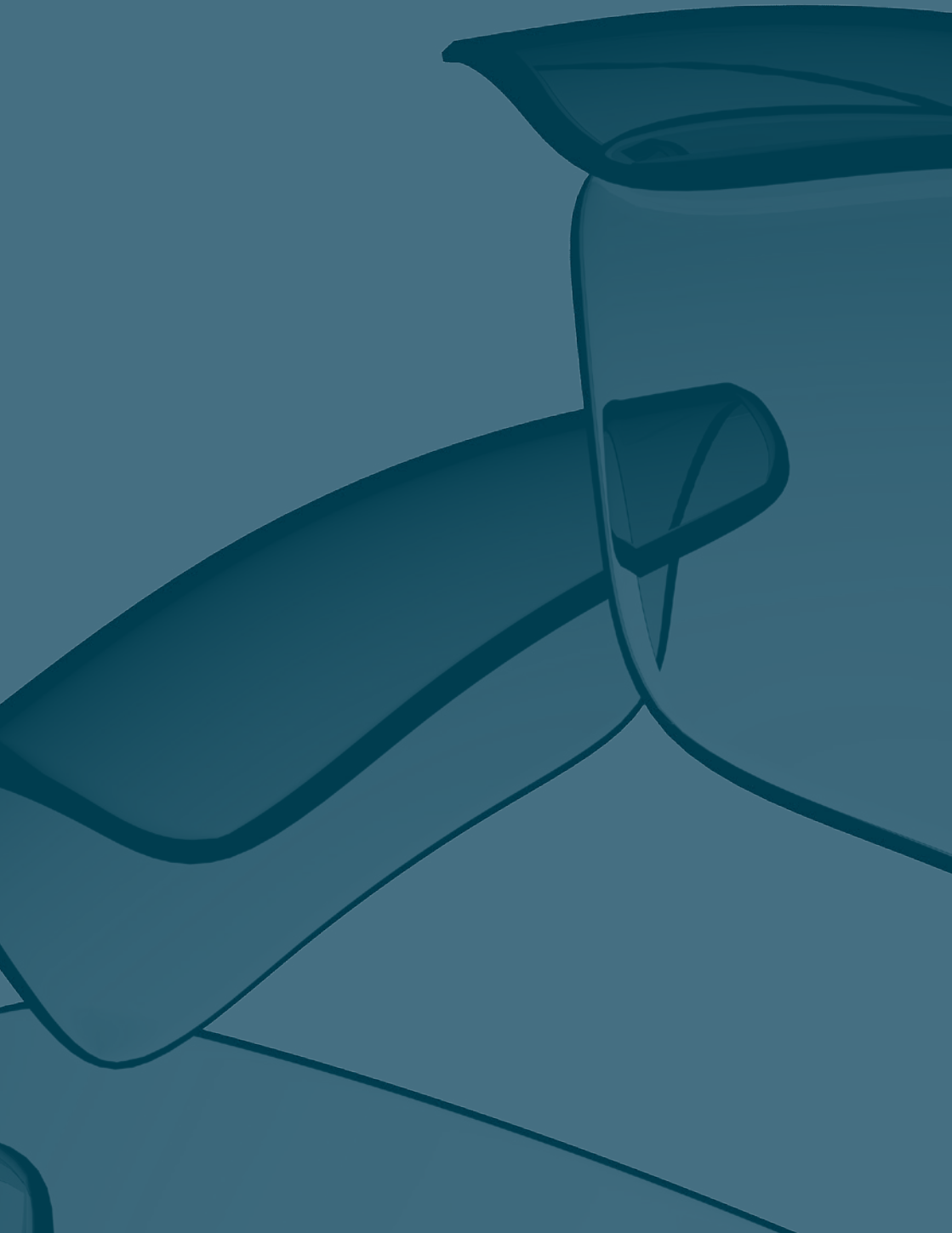
THE
INTERNATIONAL
FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION
BOARD



THEIFAB.COM
SINCE 1886

Laws of the Game

2017/18







The International Football Association Board

Münstergasse 9, 8001 Zurich, Switzerland
T: +41 (0)44 245 1886, F: +41 (0)44 245 1887
www.theifab.com

This booklet may not be reproduced or translated in whole or in part in any manner without the permission of The International Football Association Board.

Effective from 1st June 2017

Laws of the Game

2017/18

Contents

8 Introduction

- 11 The philosophy and spirit of the Laws
- 12 Managing changes to the Laws
- 14 Background to the 2017/18 revision of the Laws
- 16 The future

18 Notes on the Laws of the Game

20 Laws of the Game 2017/18

- 22 Modifications to the Laws
- 32 **01 The Field of Play**
- 42 **02 The Ball**
- 46 **03 The Players**
- 54 **04 The Players' Equipment**
- 60 **05 The Referee**
- 68 **06 The Other Match Officials**
- 76 **07 The Duration of the Match**
- 80 **08 The Start and Restart of Play**
- 84 **09 The Ball In and Out of Play**
- 86 **10 Determining the Outcome of a Match**
- 92 **11 Offside**
- 96 **12 Fouls and Misconduct**
- 106 **13 Free Kicks**
- 110 **14 The Penalty Kick**
- 116 **15 The Throw-in**
- 120 **16 The Goal Kick**
- 124 **17 The Corner Kick**

128 Law changes 2017/18

- 129 Outline summary of Law changes
- 134 Details of all Law changes

160 Glossary

- 161 Football bodies
- 162 Football terms
- 171 Referee terms

172 Practical Guidelines for Match Officials

- 173 Introduction
- 174 Positioning, Movement and Teamwork
- 188 Body language, Communication and Whistle
- 194 Other advice
 - Advantage
 - Allowance for time lost
 - Holding an opponent
 - Offside
 - Treatment /assessment after a caution / sending-off offence



IFAB®

The background of the page is a light yellow color with several thick, flowing, abstract lines in a slightly darker shade of yellow. These lines create a sense of movement and depth, resembling liquid or smoke. The lines are not straight, but curve and overlap, creating a dynamic and modern aesthetic.



Introduction

IFAB®



The philosophy and spirit of the Laws

Football is the greatest sport on earth. It is played in every country and at many different levels. The Laws of the Game are the same for all football throughout the world from the FIFA World Cup™ Final through to a game between young children in a remote village.

That the same Laws apply in every match in every confederation, country, town and village throughout the world is a considerable strength which must be preserved. This is also an opportunity which must be harnessed for the good of football everywhere.

Football must have Laws which keep the game 'fair' as a crucial foundation of the beauty of the 'beautiful game' is its fairness – this is a vital feature of the 'spirit' of the game. The best matches are those where the referee is rarely needed as the players play with respect for each other, the match officials and the Laws.

The integrity of the Laws, and the referees who apply them, must always be protected and respected. All those in authority, especially coaches and team captains, have a clear responsibility to the game to respect the match officials and their decisions.

Managing changes to the Laws

The first 'universal' football Laws were drawn up in 1863 and in 1886 The International Football Association Board (The IFAB) was founded by the four British football associations (The FA, Scottish FA, FA of Wales and Irish FA) as the worldwide body with sole responsibility for developing and preserving the Laws of the Game. FIFA joined The IFAB in 1913.

For a Law to be changed, The IFAB must be convinced that the change will benefit the game. This sometimes means that the proposal will be tested, e.g. the current video assistance for referees (VAR) and 4th substitute in extra time experiments. For every proposed change, as seen in the significant modernising revision of the Laws of the Game for 2016/17, the focus must be on: fairness, integrity, respect, safety, the enjoyment of the participants and how technology can benefit the game. The Laws must also encourage participation from everyone, regardless of background or ability.

Although accidents occur, the Laws should make the game as safe as possible. This requires players to show respect for their opponents and referees should create a safe environment by dealing strongly with those whose play is too aggressive and dangerous. The Laws embody the unacceptability of unsafe play in their disciplinary phrases, e.g. 'reckless challenge' (caution = yellow card/YC) and 'endangering the safety of an opponent' or 'using excessive force' (sending-off = red card/RC).

Football must be attractive and enjoyable for players, match officials, coaches, as well as spectators, fans, administrators etc. The Laws must help make the game attractive and enjoyable so people, regardless of age, race, religion, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability etc. want to take part and enjoy their involvement with football.

Football's Laws are relatively simple, compared to other team sports, but as many situations are 'subjective' and referees are human (and thus make mistakes) some decisions will inevitably cause debate and discussion. For some people, this discussion is part of the game's enjoyment and attraction but, whether decisions are right or wrong, the 'spirit' of the game requires that referees' decisions are always respected.

The Laws cannot deal with every possible situation, so where there is no direct provision in the Laws, The IFAB expects the referee to make a decision within the 'spirit' of the game – this often involves asking the question, “what would football want/expect?”

The IFAB will continue to engage with the global football family so changes to the Laws benefit football at all levels and in every corner of the world, and so the integrity of the game, the Laws and the referees is respected, valued and protected.

Background to the 2017/18 revision of the Laws

The 2016/17 revision of the Laws of the Game was probably the most far-reaching and comprehensive in The IFAB's history. The aim was to make the Laws clearer, more accessible and to ensure they reflect the needs of the modern game.

As with any large-scale revision, there is always a second 'follow up' stage and many of the changes for 2017/18 are clarifications which make the text clearer and/or easier to translate – most are the result of requests from individuals, groups and national FAs from around the world.

In addition to the clarifications, there are some changes which are extensions of principles established in the 2016/17 revision, for example:

- the philosophy behind reducing the disciplinary sanction from a sending-off (RC) to a caution (YC) for 'denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO)' in the penalty area if the offence is an attempt to play the ball is now applied to 'stopping a promising attack' in the penalty area which will not be a caution (YC) if the offence is an attempt to play the ball
- penalising with a direct free kick a player who enters the field of play without the required referee's permission and interferes with play, as is the case for a substitute/team official.

The 131st Annual General Meeting of The IFAB in London on 3rd March 2017 also approved some significant changes to help develop and promote football, including:

- an extension of the flexibility of national FAs (and confederations and FIFA) to modify some of the ‘organisational’ Laws (e.g. increasing the maximum number of substitutes to five, except for the highest level) to help promote and develop the football for which they are responsible as The IFAB believes that national FAs know best what will benefit football in their country
- the introduction of temporary dismissals (sin bins) as a potential alternative sanction to a caution (YC) in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots (lowest levels) football
- extension of the use of return substitutes to youth, veterans and disability football (they are already permitted in grassroots football).

Details of this important development can be found in the ‘Modifications to the Laws’ section.

The future

The IFAB has approved a strategy for 2017–22 to examine and consider proposed changes to see if they will benefit the game. This will involve focusing on three important areas:

- **Fairness and integrity**
 - will the proposed change strengthen the game's fairness and integrity on the field of play?
- **Universality and inclusion**
 - will the proposed change benefit football at all levels throughout the world?
 - will the proposed change encourage more people from all backgrounds and abilities to take part in and enjoy football?
- **The growth of technology**
 - will the proposed change have a positive impact on the game?

In the coming months, The IFAB, working with its expert panels, will consult widely on a number of important Law-related topics, including:

- Player behaviour, with special focus on:
 - the role of the captain
 - measures to tackle time-wasting
 - effective playing time
- A potentially fairer system of taking kicks from the penalty mark
- Potential use of red cards for non-playing members in the technical area
- Handball

The IFAB will continue the video assistant referee (VAR) experiment with around 20 competitions, including FIFA, undertaking 'live' experiments of the protocols established in 2016. In addition, some competitions will continue to experiment with a 4th substitute being available to teams in extra time and there will be some testing of ideas to tackle time-wasting (including effective playing time) and a potentially fairer system of taking kicks from the penalty mark. Decisions will be taken at The IFAB's 132nd AGM in 2018.

By focussing on fairness, universality and inclusion, and technology, The IFAB will continue to develop the Laws to promote a better game on every football field in every part of the world.

The IFAB has enjoyed engaging with people throughout the world and is always pleased and interested to receive suggestions or questions relating to the Laws of the Game. Indeed, many of the changes for 2017/18 are the result of suggestions from people from many different parts of the world. Please send your suggestions or questions to: lawenquiries@thefab.com

Notes

on the Laws of the Game

Official languages

The IFAB publishes the Laws of the Game in English, French, German and Spanish. If there is any divergence in the wording, the English text is authoritative.

Other languages

National FAs which translate the Laws of the Game can obtain the layout template for the 2017/18 edition of the Laws from The IFAB by contacting: info@theifab.com.

National FAs which produce a translated version of the Laws of the Game using this format are invited to send a copy to The IFAB so it can be posted on The IFAB website for use by others.

Applying the Laws

The same Laws apply in every match in every confederation, country, town and village and, apart from the Modifications permitted by The IFAB (see 'Modifications to the Laws'), the Laws must not be modified or changed.

Those who are educating match officials and other participants, should emphasise that:

- referees should apply the Laws within the 'spirit' of the game to help produce fair and safe matches
- everyone must respect the match officials and their decisions, remembering and respecting that referees are human and will make mistakes

Players have a major responsibility for the image of the game and the team captain should play an important role in helping to ensure that the Laws and referees' decisions are respected.

Key

The main Law changes are underlined and highlighted in the margin.
YC = yellow card (caution); RC = red card (sending-off).

IFAB®





Laws of the Game

2017/18

Modifications to the Laws

The universality of the Laws of the Game means that the game is essentially the same in every part of the world and at every level. As well as creating a 'fair' and safe environment in which the game is played, the Laws should also promote participation and enjoyment.

Historically, The IFAB has allowed national football associations (FAs) some flexibility to modify the 'organisational' Laws for specific categories of football. However, The IFAB strongly believes that national FAs should now be given more options to modify aspects of the way football is organised if it will benefit football in their own country.

How the game is played and refereed should be the same on every football field in the world from the FIFA World Cup™ final to the smallest village. However, the needs of a country's domestic football should determine how long the game lasts, how many people can take part and how some unfair behaviour is punished.

Consequently, the 131st AGM of The IFAB held in London on 3rd March 2017 unanimously agreed that national FAs (and confederations and FIFA) should now have the option, if they wish to use it, to modify all or some of the following organisational areas of the Laws of the Game for football for which they are responsible:

For youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football:

- size of the field of play
- size, weight and material of the ball
- width between the goalposts and height of the crossbar from the ground
- duration of the two (equal) halves of the game (and two equal halves of extra time)
- the use of return substitutes
- the use of temporary dismissals (sin bins) for some/all cautions (YCs)

For any level except competitions involving the 1st team of clubs in the top division or 'A' international teams:

- the number of substitutions each team is permitted to use up to a maximum of five

In addition, to allow national FAs further flexibility to benefit and develop their domestic football, The IFAB AGM approved the following changes relating to 'categories' of football:

- women's football is no longer a separate category and now has the same status as men's football
- the age limits for youth and veterans have been removed – national FAs, confederations and FIFA have the flexibility to decide the age restrictions for these categories
- each national FA will determine which competitions at the lowest levels of football are designated as 'grassroots' football

National FAs have the option to approve different modifications for different competitions - there is no requirement to apply them universally or to apply them all. **However, no other modifications are allowed.**

National FAs are asked to inform The IFAB of their use of these modifications, and at which levels, as this information, and especially the reason(s) why the modifications are being used, may identify development ideas/strategies which The IFAB can share to assist the development of football in other national FAs.

The IFAB would also be very interested to hear about other potential modification of the Laws of the Game which could increase participation, make football more attractive and promote its worldwide development.

IFAB®



Guidelines for Temporary dismissals (sin bins)

The 131st AGM of The IFAB held in London on 3rd March 2017 approved the use of temporary dismissals (sin bins) for all or some cautions/yellow cards (YCs) in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football, subject to the approval of the competition's national FA, confederation or FIFA, whichever is appropriate.

Reference to temporary dismissals is found in:

Law 5 – The Referee (Powers and duties):

Disciplinary action

The referee:

- has the power to show yellow or red cards and, where competition rules permit, temporarily dismiss a player, from entering the field at the start of the match until after the match has ended, including during the half-time interval, extra time and kicks from the penalty mark

A temporary dismissal is when a player commits a cautionable (YC) offence and is punished by an immediate 'suspension' from participating in the next part of that match. The philosophy is that an 'instant punishment' can have a significant and immediate positive influence on the behaviour of the offending player and, potentially, the player's team.

The national FA, confederation or FIFA, should approve (for publication in the competition rules) a temporary dismissal protocol within the following guidelines:

Players only

- Temporary dismissals apply to all players (including goalkeepers) but not for cautionable offences (YCs) committed by a substitute or substituted player

Referee's signal

- The referee will indicate a temporary dismissal by showing a yellow card (YC) and then clearly pointing with both arms to the temporary dismissal area (usually the player's technical area)

The temporary dismissal period

- The length of the temporary dismissal is the same for all offences
- The length of the temporary dismissal should be between 10–15% of the total playing time (e.g. 10 minutes in a 90-minute match; 8 minutes in an 80-minute match)
- The temporary dismissal period begins when play restarts after the player has left the field of play
- The referee should include in the temporary dismissal period any time 'lost' for a stoppage for which 'additional time' will be allowed at the end of the half (e.g. substitution, injury etc...)
- Competitions must decide who will help the referee time the dismissal period – it could be the responsibility of a delegate, 4th official or neutral assistant referee; conversely it could be a team official
- Once the temporary dismissal period has been completed, the player can return from the touchline with the referee's permission, which can be given while the ball is in play
- The referee has the final decision as to when the player can return
- A temporarily dismissed player can not be substituted until the end of the temporary dismissal period (but not if the team has used all its permitted substitutes)
- If a temporary dismissal period has not been completed at the end of the first half (or the end of the second half when extra time is to be played) the remaining part of the temporary dismissal period is served from the start of the second half (start of extra time)
- A player who is still serving a temporary dismissal at the end of the match is permitted to take part in kicks from the penalty mark (penalties)

Temporary dismissal area

- A temporarily dismissed player should remain within the technical area (where one exists) or with the team's coach/technical staff, unless 'warming up' (under the same conditions as a substitute)

Offences before/during/after a temporary dismissal

- A temporarily dismissed player who commits a cautionable (YC) or sending-off (RC) offence during their temporary dismissal period will take no further part in the match and may not be replaced or substituted

Further disciplinary action

- Competitions/national FAs will decide if temporary dismissals must be reported to the appropriate authorities and whether any further disciplinary action may be taken e.g. suspension for accumulating a number of temporary dismissals, as with cautions (YCs)

Temporary dismissal systems

A competition may use one of the following temporary dismissal systems:

- System A – for all cautions (YCs)
- System B – for some but not all cautions (YCs)

System A – temporary dismissal for all cautions (YCs)

- All cautions (YCs) are punished with a temporary dismissal
- A player who commits a 2nd caution (YC) in the same match:
 - will receive a second temporary dismissal and then takes no further part in the match
 - may be replaced by a substitute at the end of the second temporary dismissal period if the player's team has not used its maximum number of substitutes (this is because the team has already been 'punished' by playing without that player for 2 x temporary dismissal periods)

System B – temporary dismissal for some but not all cautions (YCs)*

- A pre-defined list of cautionable (YC) offences will be punished by a temporary dismissal
- All other cautionable offences are punished with a caution (YC)
- A player who has been temporarily dismissed and then receives a caution (YC) continues playing
- A player who has received a caution (YC) and then receives a temporary dismissal can continue playing after the end of the temporary dismissal period
- A player who receives a second temporary dismissal in the same match will serve the temporary dismissal and then takes no further part in the match. The player may be replaced by a substitute at the end of the second temporary dismissal period if the player's team has not used its maximum number of substitutes
- A player who receives a second caution (YC) in the same match will be sent off and takes no further part in the match and may not be replaced/substituted

**Some competitions may find it valuable to use temporary dismissals only for cautions (YCs) for offence relating to 'inappropriate' behaviour, e.g.*

- *Simulation*
- *Deliberately delaying the opposing team's restart of the match*
- *Dissent or verbal comments or gestures*
- *Stopping a promising attack by holding, pulling, pushing or handball*
- *Kicker illegally feinting at a penalty kick*

Guidelines for return substitutes

Following approval at the 131st AGM of The IFAB held in London on 3rd March 2017 The Laws of the Game now permit the use of return substitutes in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football, subject to the approval of the competition's national FA, confederation or FIFA, whichever is appropriate.

Reference to return substitutions is found in:

Law 3 – The Players (Number of substitutions): Return Substitutes

- The use of return substitutions is only permitted in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football, subject to the agreement of the national football association, confederation or FIFA.

A 'return substitute' is a player who has already played in the match and has been substituted (a substituted player) and later in the match returns to play by replacing another player.

Apart from the dispensation for a substituted player to return to play in the match, all other provisions of Law 3 and the Laws of the Game apply to return substitutes. In particular, the substitution procedure outlined in Law 3 must be followed.

IFAB®



Law

01

The Field of Play

1. Field surface

The field of play must be a wholly natural or, if competition rules permit, a wholly artificial playing surface except where competition rules permit an integrated combination of artificial and natural materials (hybrid system).

The colour of artificial surfaces must be green.

Where artificial surfaces are used in competition matches between representative teams of national football associations affiliated to FIFA or international club competition matches, the surface must meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Programme for Football Turf or the International Match Standard, unless special dispensation is given by The IFAB.

2. Field markings

The field of play must be rectangular and marked with continuous lines which must not be dangerous; artificial playing surface material may be used for the field markings on natural fields if it is not dangerous. These lines belong to the areas of which they are boundaries.

Only the lines indicated in Law 1 are to be marked on the field of play.

The two longer boundary lines are touchlines. The two shorter lines are goal lines.

The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line, which joins the midpoints of the two touchlines.

The centre mark is at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of 9.15 m (10yds) is marked around it.

Marks may be made off the field of play 9.15 m (10 yds) from the corner arc at right angles to the goal lines and the touchlines.

All lines must be of the same width, which must not be more than 12 cm (5 ins). The goal lines must be of the same width as the goalposts and the crossbar.

Where artificial surfaces are used, other lines are permitted provided they are a different colour and clearly distinguishable from the football lines.

A player who makes unauthorised marks on the field of play must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour. If the referee notices this being done during the match, the player is cautioned when the ball next goes out of play.

3. Dimensions

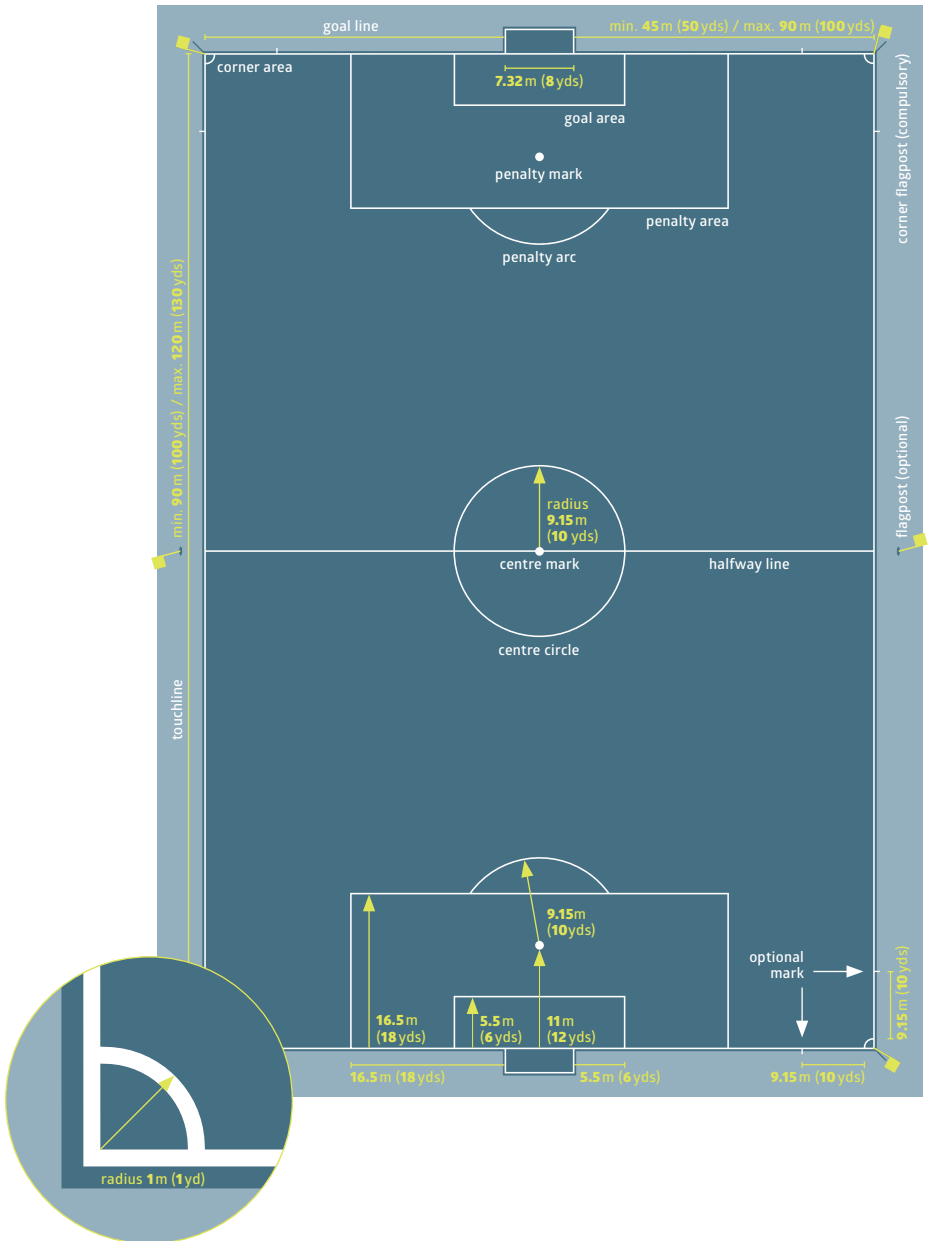
The touchline must be longer than the goal line.

- Length (touchline):
minimum 90 m (100 yds)
maximum 120 m (130 yds)
- Length (goal line):
minimum 45 m (50 yds)
maximum 90 m (100 yds)

4. Dimensions for international matches

- Length (touchline):
minimum 100 m (110 yds)
maximum 110 m (120 yds)
- Length (goal line):
minimum 64 m (70 yds)
maximum 75 m (80 yds)

Competitions may determine the length of the goal line and touchline within the above dimensions.



5. The goal area

Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 5.5 m (6yds) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for 5.5 m (6yds) and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

6. The penalty area

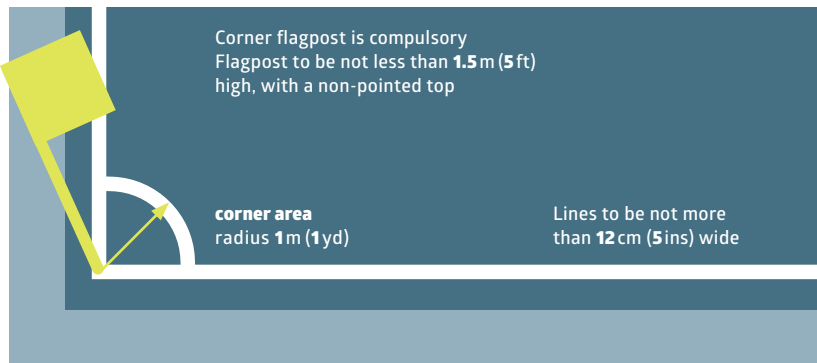
Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 16.5 m (18yds) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for 16.5 m (18yds) and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area.

Within each penalty area, a penalty mark is made 11 m (12yds) from the midpoint between the goalposts.

An arc of a circle with a radius of 9.15 m (10yds) from the centre of each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

7. The corner area

The corner area is defined by a quarter circle with a radius of 1 m (1yd) from each corner flagpost drawn inside the field of play.



8. Flagposts

A flagpost, at least 1.5 m (5 ft) high, with a non-pointed top and a flag must be placed at each corner.

Flagposts may be placed at each end of the halfway line, at least 1 m (1 yd) outside the touchline.

9. The technical area

The technical area relates to matches played in stadiums with a designated seated area for team officials and substitutes as outlined below:

- the technical area should only extend 1 m (1 yd) on either side of the designated seated area and up to a distance of 1 m (1 yd) from the touchline
- markings should be used to define the area
- the number of persons permitted to occupy the technical area is defined by the competition rules
- the occupants of the technical area:
 - are identified before the start of the match in accordance with the competition rules
 - must behave in a responsible manner
 - must remain within its confines except in special circumstances, e.g. a physiotherapist/doctor entering the field of play, with the referee's permission, to assess an injured player
- only one person at a time is authorised to convey tactical instructions from the technical area

10. Goals

A goal must be placed on the centre of each goal line.

A goal consists of two vertical posts equidistant from the corner flagposts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The goalposts and crossbar must be made of approved material. They must be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape and must not be dangerous.

The distance between the inside of the posts is 7.32 m (8yds) and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is 2.44 m (8ft).

The position of the goalposts in relation to the goal line must be in accordance with the graphics.

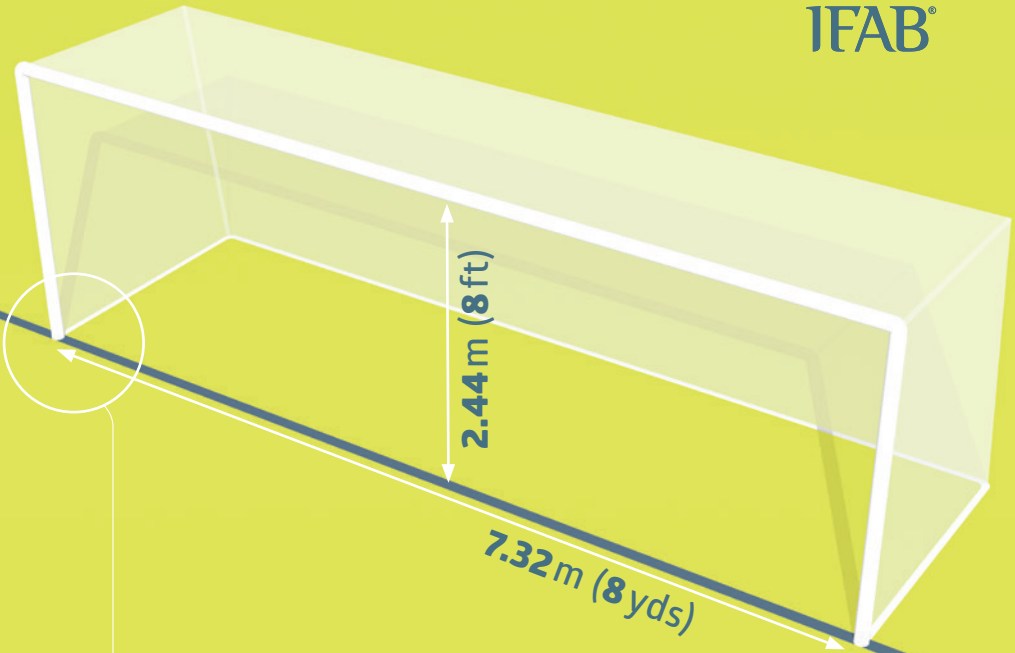
The goalposts and the crossbar must be white and have the same width and depth, which must not exceed 12 cm (5 ins).

If the crossbar becomes displaced or broken, play is stopped until it has been repaired or replaced in position. If it can not be repaired the match must be abandoned. A rope or any flexible or dangerous material may not replace the crossbar. Play is restarted with a dropped ball.

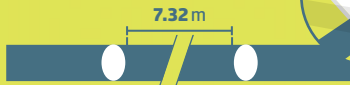
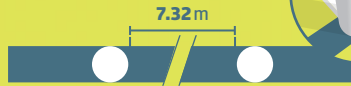
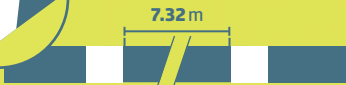
Nets may be attached to the goals and the ground behind the goal; they must be properly supported and must not interfere with the goalkeeper.

Safety

Goals (including portable goals) must be firmly secured to the ground.



The position of the goalposts in relation to the goal line must be in accordance with the graphics below.



11. Goal line technology (GLT)

GLT systems may be used to verify whether a goal has been scored to support the referee's decision.

Where GLT is used, modifications to the goal frame may be permitted in accordance with the specifications stipulated in the FIFA Quality Programme for GLT and with the Laws of the Game. The use of GLT must be stipulated in the competition rules.

Principles of GLT

GLT applies solely to the goal line and is only used to determine whether a goal has been scored.

The indication of whether a goal has been scored must be immediate and automatically confirmed within one second by the GLT system only to the match officials (via the referee's watch, by vibration and visual signal).

Requirements and specifications of GLT

If GLT is used in competition matches, the competition organisers must ensure that the system is certified according to one of the following standards:

- FIFA Quality PRO
- FIFA Quality
- IMS - INTERNATIONAL MATCH STANDARD

An independent testing institute must verify the accuracy and functionality of the different technology providers' systems in accordance with the Testing Manual. If the technology does not function in accordance with the Testing Manual, the referee must not use the GLT system and must report this to the appropriate authority.

Where GLT is used, the referee must test the technology's functionality before the match as set out in the FIFA Quality Programme for GLT Testing Manual.

12. Commercial advertising

No form of commercial advertising, whether real or virtual, is permitted on the field of play, on the ground within the area enclosed by the goal nets or the technical area, or on the ground within 1 m (1yd) of the boundary lines from the time the teams enter the field of play until they have left it at half-time and from the time the teams re-enter the field of play until the end of the match. Advertising is not permitted on the goals, nets, flagposts or their flags and no extraneous equipment (cameras, microphones, etc.) may be attached to these items.

In addition, upright advertising must be at least:

- 1 m (1yd) from the touchlines of the field of play
- the same distance from the goal line as the depth of the goal net
- 1 m (1yd) from the goal net

13. Logos and emblems

The reproduction, whether real or virtual, of representative logos or emblems of FIFA, confederations, national football associations, competitions, clubs or other bodies is forbidden on the field of play, the goal nets and the areas they enclose, the goals, and the flagposts during playing time. They are permitted on the flags on the flagposts.

Law

02

The Ball

1. Qualities and measurements

All balls must be:

- spherical
- made of suitable material
- of a circumference of between 70 cm (28 ins) and 68 cm (27 ins)
- between 450 g (16 oz) and 410 g (14 oz) in weight at the start of the match
- of a pressure equal to 0.6–1.1 atmosphere (600–1,100 g/cm²) at sea level (8.5 lbs/sq in–15.6 lbs/sq in)

All balls used in matches played in an official competition organised under the auspices of FIFA or confederations must bear one of the following:



- FIFA Quality PRO



- FIFA Quality



- IMS - INTERNATIONAL MATCH STANDARD

Balls carrying previous quality marks such as “FIFA Approved”, “FIFA Inspected” or “International Matchball Standard” may be used in aforementioned competitions until 31 July 2017.

Each mark indicates that it has been officially tested and meets the specific technical requirements for that mark which are additional to the minimum specifications stipulated in Law 2 and must be approved by The IFAB. The institutes conducting the tests are subject to the approval of FIFA.

Where goal line technology (GLT) is used, balls with integrated technology must carry one of the above listed quality marks.

National football association competitions may require the use of balls bearing one of these marks.

In matches played in an official competition organised under the auspices of FIFA, confederations or national football associations, no form of commercial advertising is permitted on the ball, except for the logo/emblem of the competition, the competition organiser and the authorised manufacturer's trademark. The competition regulations may restrict the size and number of such markings.

2. Replacement of a defective ball

If the ball becomes defective:

- play is stopped and
- restarted by dropping the replacement ball where the original ball became defective

If the ball becomes defective at a kick-off, goal kick, corner kick, free kick, penalty kick or throw-in the restart is re-taken.

If the ball becomes defective during a penalty kick or kicks from the penalty mark as it moves forward and before it touches a player, crossbar or goalposts the penalty kick is retaken.

The ball may not be changed during the match without the referee's permission.

3. Additional balls

Additional balls which meet the requirements of Law 2 may be placed around the field of play and their use is under the referee's control.

IFAB



Law

03

The Players

1. Number of players

A match is played by two teams, each with a maximum of eleven players; one must be the goalkeeper. A match may not start or continue if either team has fewer than seven players.

If a team has fewer than seven players because one or more players has deliberately left the field of play, the referee is not obliged to stop play and the advantage may be played, but the match must not resume after the ball has gone out of play if a team does not have the minimum number of seven players.

If the competition rules state that all players and substitutes must be named before kick-off and a team starts a match with fewer than eleven players, only the players and substitutes named on the team list may take part in the match upon their arrival.

2. Number of substitutions

Official competitions

The number of substitutes, up to a maximum of five, which may be used in any match played in an official competition will be determined by FIFA, the confederation or the national football association except for men and women competitions involving the 1st teams of clubs in the top division or senior 'A' international teams, where the maximum is three substitutes.

The competition rules must state how many substitutes may be named, from three to a maximum of twelve.

Other matches

In national “A” team matches, a maximum of six substitutes may be used.

In all other matches, a greater number of substitutes may be used provided that:

- the teams reach agreement on a maximum number
- the referee is informed before the match

If the referee is not informed, or if no agreement is reached before the match, each team is allowed a maximum of six substitutes.

Return substitutions

The use of return substitutions is only permitted in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football, subject to the agreement of the national football association, confederation or FIFA.

3. Substitution procedure

The names of the substitutes must be given to the referee before the start of the match. Any substitute not named by this time may not take part in the match.

To replace a player with a substitute, the following must be observed:

- the referee must be informed before any substitution is made
- the player being substituted receives the referee’s permission to leave the field of play, unless already off the field
- the player being replaced is not obliged to leave at the halfway line and takes no further part in the match, except where return substitutions are permitted
- if a player who is to be replaced refuses to leave, play continues

The substitute only enters:

- during a stoppage in play
- at the halfway line
- after the player being replaced has left
- after receiving a signal from the referee

The substitution is completed when a substitute enters the field of play; from that moment, the replaced player becomes a substituted player and the substitute becomes a player and can take any restart.

All substituted players and substitutes are subject to the referee's authority whether they play or not.

4. Changing the goalkeeper

Any of the players may change places with the goalkeeper if:

- the referee is informed before the change is made
- the change is made during a stoppage in play

5. Offences and sanctions

If a named substitute starts a match instead of a named player and the referee is not informed of this change:

- the referee allows the named substitute to continue playing
- no disciplinary sanction is taken against the named substitute
- the named player can become a named substitute
- the number of substitutions is not reduced
- the referee reports the incident to the appropriate authorities

If a substitution is made during the half-time interval or before extra time, the procedure must be completed before the match restarts. If the referee is not informed, the named substitute may continue to play, no disciplinary action is taken and the matter is reported to the appropriate authority.

If a player changes places with the goalkeeper without the referee's permission, the referee:

- allows play to continue
- cautions both players when the ball is next out of play but not if the change occurred during half-time (including extra time) or the period between the end of the match and the start of extra time and/or kicks from the penalty mark.

For any other offences:

- the players are cautioned
- play is restarted with an indirect free kick, from the position of the ball when play was stopped

6. Players and substitutes sent off

A player who is sent off:

- before submission of the team list can not be named on the team list in any capacity
- after being named on the team list and before kick-off may be replaced by a named substitute, who can not be replaced; the number of substitutions the team can make is not reduced
- after the kick-off can not be replaced

A named substitute who is sent off before or after the kick-off may not be replaced.

7. Extra persons on the field of play

The coach and other officials named on the team list (with the exception of players or substitutes) are team officials. Anyone not named on the team list as a player, substitute or team official is an outside agent.

If a team official, substitute, substituted or sent off player or outside agent enters the field of play the referee must:

- only stop play if there is interference with play
- have the person removed when play stops
- take appropriate disciplinary action

If play is stopped and the interference was by:

- a team official, substitute, substituted or sent off player, play restarts with a direct free kick or penalty kick
- an outside agent, play restarts with a dropped ball

If a ball is going into the goal and the interference does not prevent a defending player playing the ball, the goal is awarded if the ball enters the goal (even if contact was made with the ball) unless the ball enters the opponents' goal.

8. Player outside the field of play

If a player who requires the referee's permission to re-enter the field of play re-enters without the referee's permission, the referee must:

- stop play (not immediately if the player does not interfere with play or a match official or if the advantage can be applied)
- caution the player for entering the field of play without permission

If the referee stops play, it must be restarted:

- with a direct free kick from the position of the interference
- with an indirect free kick from the position of the ball when play was stopped if there was no interference

A player who crosses a boundary line as part of a playing movement, does not commit an offence.

9. Goal scored with an extra person on the field of play

If, after a goal is scored, the referee realises, before play restarts, an extra person was on the field of play when the goal was scored:

- the referee must disallow the goal if the extra person was:
 - a player, substitute, substituted player, sent off player or team official of the team that scored the goal; play is restarted with a direct free kick from the position of the extra person
 - an outside agent who interfered with play unless a goal results as outlined above in 'extra persons on the field of play'; play is restarted with a dropped ball
- the referee must allow the goal if the extra person was:
 - a player, substitute, substituted player, sent off player or team official of the team that conceded the goal
 - an outside agent who did not interfere with play

In all cases, the referee must have the extra person removed from the field of play.

If, after a goal is scored and play has restarted, the referee realises an extra person was on the field of play when the goal was scored, the goal can not be disallowed. If the extra person is still on the field the referee must:

- stop play
- have the extra person removed
- restart with a dropped ball or free kick as appropriate

The referee must report the incident to the appropriate authority.

10. Team captain

The team captain has no special status or privileges but has a degree of responsibility for the behaviour of the team.



Law

04

The Players' Equipment

1. Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous.

All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc.) are forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not permitted.

The players must be inspected before the start of the match and substitutes before they enter the field of play. If a player is wearing or using unauthorised/dangerous equipment or jewellery the referee must order the player to:

- remove the item
- leave the field of play at the next stoppage if the player is unable or unwilling to comply

A player who refuses to comply or wears the item again must be cautioned.

2. Compulsory equipment

The compulsory equipment of a player comprises the following separate items:

- a shirt with sleeves
- shorts
- socks – tape or any material applied or worn externally must be the same colour as that part of the sock it is applied to or covers
- shinguards – these must be made of a suitable material to provide reasonable protection and covered by the socks
- footwear

Goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms.

A player whose footwear or shinguard is lost accidentally must replace it as soon as possible and no later than when the ball next goes out of play; if before doing so the player plays the ball and/or scores a goal, the goal is awarded.

3. Colours

- The two teams must wear colours that distinguish them from each other and the match officials
- Each goalkeeper must wear colours that are distinguishable from the other players and the match officials
- If the two goalkeepers' shirts are the same colour and neither has another shirt, the referee allows the match to be played

Undershirts must be the same colour as the main colour of the shirt sleeve; undershorts/tights must be the same colour as the main colour of the shorts or the lowest part of the shorts – players of the same team must wear the same colour.

4. Other equipment

Non-dangerous protective equipment, for example headgear, facemasks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material is permitted as are goalkeepers' caps and sports spectacles.

Head Covers

Where head covers (excluding goalkeepers' caps) are worn, they must:

- be black or the same main colour as the shirt (provided that the players of the same team wear the same colour)
- be in keeping with the professional appearance of the player's equipment
- not be attached to the shirt
- not be dangerous to the player wearing it or any other player (e.g. opening/closing mechanism around neck)
- not have any part(s) extending out from the surface (protruding elements)

Electronic communication

Players (including substitutes/substituted and sent off players) are not permitted to wear or use any form of electronic or communication equipment (except where EPTS is allowed). The use of any form of electronic communication by team officials is not permitted except where it directly relates to player welfare or safety.

Electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS)

Where wearable technology (WT) as part of electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS) is used in matches played in an official competition organised under the auspices of FIFA, confederations or national football associations, the technology attached to the player's equipment must bear the following mark:



This mark indicates that it has been officially tested and meets the minimum safety requirements of the International Match Standard developed by FIFA and approved by The IFAB.

The institutes conducting the tests are subject to the approval of FIFA. The transition period runs until 31 May 2018.

Where electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS) are used (subject to the agreement of the national football association/competition organiser):

- they must not be dangerous
- information and data transmitted from the devices/systems is not permitted to be received or used in the technical area during the match

5. Slogans, statements, images and advertising

Equipment must not have any political, religious or personal slogans, statements or images. Players must not reveal undergarments that show political, religious, personal slogans, statements or images, or advertising other than the manufacturer's logo. For any offence the player and/or the team will be sanctioned by the competition organiser, national football association or by FIFA.

6. Offences and sanctions

For any offence play need not be stopped and the player:

- is instructed by the referee to leave the field of play to correct the equipment
- leaves when play stops, unless the equipment has already been corrected

A player who leaves the field of play to correct or change equipment must:

- have the equipment checked by a match official before being allowed to re-enter
- only re-enter with the referee's permission (which may be given during play)

A player who enters without permission must be cautioned and if play is stopped to issue the caution, an indirect free kick is awarded from the position of the ball when play was stopped.

IFAB®



Law

05

The Referee

1. The authority of the referee

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

2. Decisions of the referee

Decisions will be made to the best of the referee's ability according to the Laws of the Game and the 'spirit of the game' and will be based on the opinion of the referee who has the discretion to take appropriate action within the framework of the Laws of the Game.

The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored and the result of the match, are final. The decisions of the referee, and all other match officials, must always be respected.

The referee may not change a decision on realising that it is incorrect or on the advice of another match official if play has restarted or the referee has signalled the end of the first or second half (including extra time) and left the field of play or terminated the match.

If a referee is incapacitated, play may continue under the supervision of the other match officials until the ball is next out of play.

3. Powers and duties

The referee:

- enforces the Laws of the Game
- controls the match in cooperation with the other match officials
- acts as timekeeper, keeps a record of the match and provides the appropriate authorities with a match report, including information on disciplinary action and any other incidents that occurred before, during or after the match
- supervises and/or indicates the restart of play

Advantage

- allows play to continue when an offence occurs and the non-offending team will benefit from the advantage and penalises the offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time or within a few seconds

Disciplinary action

- punishes the more serious offence, in terms of sanction, restart, physical severity and tactical impact, when more than one offence occurs at the same time
- takes disciplinary action against players guilty of cautionable and sending-off offences
- has the authority to take disciplinary action from entering the field of play for the pre-match inspection until leaving the field of play after the match ends (including kicks from the penalty mark). If, before entering the field of play at the start of the match, a player commits a sending-off offence, the referee has the authority to prevent the player taking part in the match (*see Law 3.6*); the referee will report any other misconduct
- has the power to show yellow or red cards and, where competition rules permit, temporarily dismiss a player, from entering the field of play at the start of the match until after the match has ended, including during the half-time interval, extra time and kicks from the penalty mark
- takes action against team officials who fail to act in a responsible manner and may expel them from the field of play and its immediate surrounds; a medical team official who commits a dismissible offence may remain if the team has no other medical person available, and act if a player needs medical attention.
- acts on the advice of other match officials regarding incidents that the referee has not seen

Injuries

- allows play to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is only slightly injured
- stops play if a player is seriously injured and ensures that the player is

removed from the field of play. An injured player may not be treated on the field of play and may only re-enter after play has restarted; if the ball is in play, re-entry must be from the touchline but if the ball is out of play, it may be from any boundary line. Exceptions to the requirement to leave the field of play are only when:

- a goalkeeper is injured
- a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need attention
- players from the same team have collided and need attention
- a severe injury has occurred
- a player is injured as the result of a physical offence for which the opponent is cautioned or sent off (e.g. reckless or serious foul challenge), if the assessment/treatment is completed quickly
- ensures that any player bleeding leaves the field of play. The player may only re-enter on receiving a signal from the referee, who must be satisfied that the bleeding has stopped and there is no blood on the equipment
- if the referee has authorised the doctors and /or stretcher bearers to enter the field of play, the player must leave on a stretcher or on foot. A player who does not comply, must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour
- if the referee has decided to caution or send off a player who is injured and has to leave the field of play for treatment, the card must be shown before the player leaves
- if play has not been stopped for another reason, or if an injury suffered by a player is not the result of an offence, play is restarted with a dropped ball

Outside interference

- stops, suspends or abandons the match for any offences or because of outside interference e.g. if:
 - the floodlights are inadequate
 - an object thrown by a spectator hits a match official, a player or team official, the referee may allow the match to continue, or stop, suspend or abandon it depending on the severity of the incident
 - a spectator blows a whistle which interferes with play - play is stopped and restarted with a dropped ball

- an extra ball, other object or animal enters the field of play during the match, the referee must:
 - stop play (and restart with a dropped ball) only if it interferes with play unless the ball is going into the goal and the interference does not prevent a defending player playing the ball, the goal is awarded if the ball enters the goal (even if contact was made with the ball) unless the ball enters the opponents' goal
 - allow play to continue if it does not interfere with play and have it removed at the earliest possible opportunity
- allows no unauthorised persons to enter the field of play

4. Referee's equipment

Compulsory equipment

Referees must have the following equipment:

- Whistle(s)
- Watch(es)
- Red and yellow cards
- Notebook (or other means of keeping a record of the match)

Other equipment

Referees may be permitted to use:

- Equipment for communicating with other match officials – buzzer/beep flags, headsets etc.
- EPTS or other fitness monitoring equipment

Referees and other match officials are prohibited from wearing jewellery or any other electronic equipment.

5. Referee signals

Refer to graphics for approved referee signals.

In addition to the current 'two armed' signal for an advantage, a similar 'one arm' signal is now permitted as it is not always easy for referees to run with both arms extended.



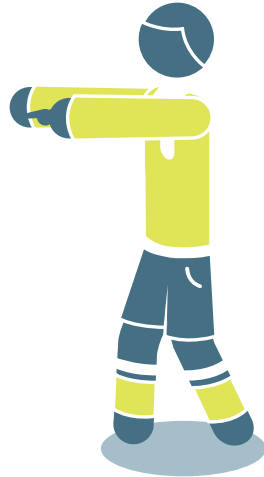
Indirect free kick



Direct free kick



Advantage (1)



Advantage (2)



Penalty kick



Red and **Yellow** card



Corner kick



Goal kick

6. Liability of Match Officials

A referee or other match official is not held liable for:

- any kind of injury suffered by a player, official or spectator
- any damage to property of any kind
- any other loss suffered by any individual, club, company, association or other body, which is due or which may be due to any decision taken under the terms of the Laws of the Game or in respect of the normal procedures required to hold, play and control a match.

Such decisions may include a decision:

- that the condition of the field of play or its surrounds or that the weather conditions are such as to allow or not to allow a match to take place
- to abandon a match for whatever reason
- as to the suitability of the field equipment and ball used during a match
- to stop or not to stop a match due to spectator interference or any problem in spectator areas
- to stop or not to stop play to allow an injured player to be removed from the field of play for treatment
- to require an injured player to be removed from the field of play for treatment
- to allow or not to allow a player to wear certain clothing or equipment
- where the referee has the authority, to allow or not to allow any persons (including team or stadium officials, security officers, photographers or other media representatives) to be present in the vicinity of the field of play
- any other decision taken in accordance with the Laws of the Game or in conformity with their duties under the terms of FIFA, confederation, national football association or competition rules or regulations under which the match is played

Law

06

The Other Match Officials

Other match officials (two assistant referees, fourth official, two additional assistant referees and reserve assistant referee) may be appointed to matches. They will assist the referee in controlling the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game but the final decision will always be taken by the referee.

The match officials operate under the direction of the referee. In the event of undue interference or improper conduct, the referee will relieve them of their duties and make a report to the appropriate authorities.

With the exception of the reserve assistant referee, they assist the referee with offences when they have a clearer view than the referee and they must submit a report to the appropriate authorities on any serious misconduct or other incident that occurred out of the view of the referee and the other match officials. They must advise the referee and other match officials of any report being made.

The match officials assist the referee with inspecting the field of play, the balls and players' equipment (including if problems have been resolved) and maintaining records of time, goals, misconduct etc.

Competition rules must state clearly who replaces a match official who is unable to start or continue and any associated changes. In particular, it must be clear whether, if the referee is unable to start or continue, the fourth official or the senior assistant referee or senior additional assistant referee takes over.

1. Assistant referees

They indicate when:

- the whole of the ball leaves the field of play and which team is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or throw-in
- a player in an offside position may be penalised
- a substitution is requested
- at penalty kicks, the goalkeeper moves off the goal line before the ball is kicked and if the ball crosses the line; if additional assistant referees have been appointed the assistant referee takes a position in line with the penalty mark

The assistant referee's assistance also includes monitoring the substitution procedure.

The assistant referee may enter the field of play to help control the 9.15 m (10 yards) distance.

2. Fourth official

The fourth official's assistance also includes:

- supervising the substitution procedure
- checking a player's/substitute's equipment
- the re-entry of a player following a signal/approval from the referee
- supervising the replacement balls
- indicating the minimum amount of additional time the referee intends to play at the end of each half (including extra time)
- informing the referee of irresponsible behaviour by any technical area occupant

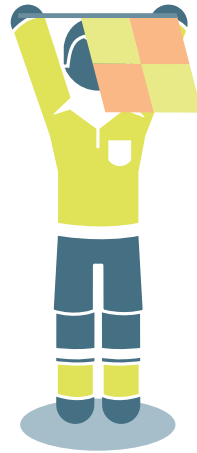
3. Additional assistant referees

The additional assistant referees may indicate:

- when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, including when a goal is scored
- which team is entitled to a corner kick or goal kick
- whether, at penalty kicks, the goalkeeper moves off the goal line before the ball is kicked and if the ball crosses the line

4. Reserve assistant referee

The only duty of a reserve assistant referee is to replace an assistant referee or fourth official who is unable to continue.



5. Assistant referee signals

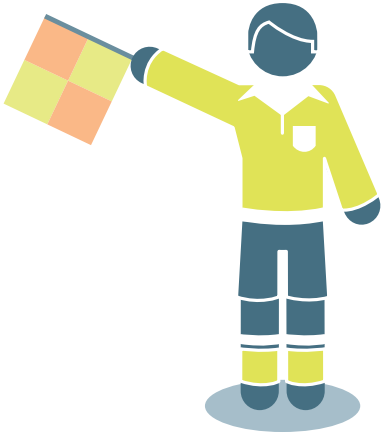
Substitution



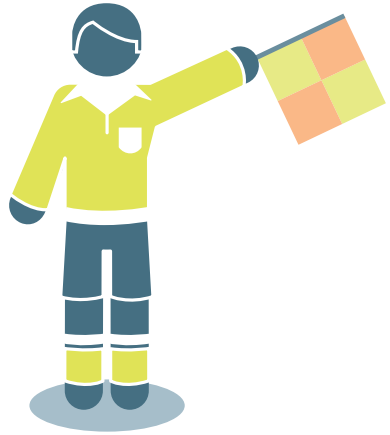
Attacking free kicks



Defending free kicks



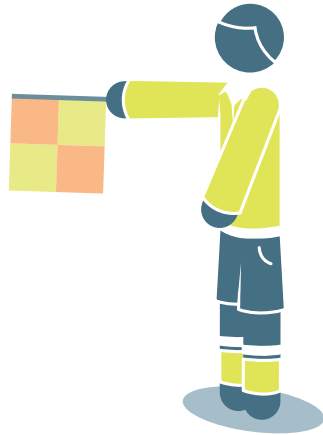
Throw-in for **attacker**



Throw-in for **defender**



Corner kick



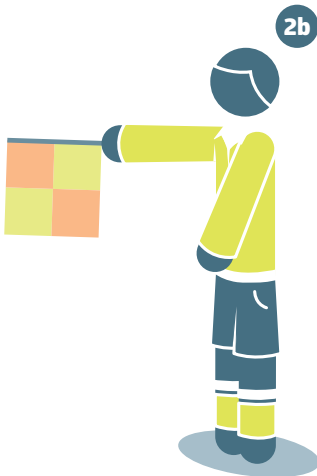
Goal kick



Offside



Offside on the
near side of the field



Offside in the
middle of the field



Offside on the
far side of the field

6. Additional assistant referee signals



goal
(unless the ball has very clearly
passed over the goal line)



Law

07

The Duration of the Match

1. Periods of play

A match lasts for two equal halves of 45 minutes which may only be reduced if agreed between the referee and the two teams before the start of the match and is in accordance with competition rules.

2. Half-time interval

Players are entitled to an interval at half-time, not exceeding 15 minutes; a short drinks break is permitted at the interval of half-time in extra time. Competition rules must state the duration of the half-time interval and it may be altered only with the referee's permission.

3. Allowance for time lost

Allowance is made by the referee in each half for all time lost in that half through:

- substitutions
- assessment and/or removal of injured players
- wasting time
- disciplinary sanctions
- stoppages for drinks or other medical reasons permitted by competition rules
- any other cause, including any significant delay to a restart (e.g. goal celebrations)

The fourth official indicates the minimum additional time decided by the referee at the end of the final minute of each half. The additional time may be increased by the referee but not reduced.

The referee must not compensate for a timekeeping error during the first half by changing the length of the second half.

4. Penalty kick

If a penalty kick has to be taken or retaken, the half is extended until the penalty kick is completed.

5. Abandoned match

An abandoned match is replayed unless the competition rules or organisers determine otherwise.



Law

08

The Start and Restart of Play

A kick-off starts both halves of a match, both halves of extra time and restarts play after a goal has been scored. Free kicks (direct or indirect), penalty kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are other restarts (see Laws 13–17). A dropped ball is the restart when the referee stops play and the Law does not require one of the above restarts.

If an offence occurs when the ball is not in play this does not change how play is restarted.

1. Kick-off

Procedure

- the team that wins the toss of a coin decides which goal it will attack in the first half
- their opponents take the kick-off
- the team that wins the toss takes the kick-off to start the second half
- for the second half, the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals
- after a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by their opponents

For every kick-off:

- all players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play
- the opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the ball until it is in play
- the ball must be stationary on the centre mark
- the referee gives a signal
- the ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves
- a goal may be scored directly against the opponents from the kick-off; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents

Infringements and sanctions

If the player taking the kick-off touches the ball again before it has touched another player an indirect free kick, or for deliberate handball a direct free kick, is awarded.

In the event of any other infringement of the kick-off procedure the kick-off is retaken.

2. Dropped ball

Procedure

The referee drops the ball at the position where it was when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area in which case the ball is dropped on the goal area line which is parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was when play was stopped.

The ball is in play when it touches the ground.

Any number of players may contest a dropped ball (including the goalkeepers); the referee cannot decide who may contest a dropped ball or its outcome.

Infringements and sanctions

The ball is dropped again if it:

- touches a player before it touches the ground
- leaves the field of play after it touches the ground, without touching a player

If a dropped ball enters the goal without touching at least two players play is restarted with:

- a goal kick if it enters the opponents' goal
- a corner kick if it enters the team's goal

IFAB



Law

09

The Ball in and out of Play

1. Ball out of play

The ball is out of play when:

- it has wholly passed over the goal line or touchline on the ground or in the air
- play has been stopped by the referee

2. Ball in play

The ball is in play at all other times, including when it rebounds off a match official, goalpost, crossbar or corner flagpost and remains in the field of play.