

Soccer Rules

Rule 1: The Field of Play

- 1- Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touch line must be greater than the length of the goal line

Rule 2: The Ball

1. The ball may not be changed during the match without the authority of the referee
2. A regular size ball must be used.

Rule 3: The Number of Players

1. A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than 6 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper.
2. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than seven players.
3. To replace a player by a substitute, the following conditions must be observed:
 - the referee is informed before any proposed substitution is made.
 - a substitute only enters the field of play after the player being replaced has left and after receiving a signal from the referee.
 - a substitute only enters the field of play at the halfway line and during a stoppage in the match.
 - a substitution is completed when a substitute enters the field of play.
 - all substitutes are subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referee, whether called upon to play or not.
4. Any of the other players may change places with the goalkeeper, provided that:
 - the referee is informed before the change is made.
 - the change is made during a stoppage in the match.
5. If a substitute enters the field of play without the referee's permission:
 - play is stopped.
 - the substitute is cautioned, shown the yellow card and required to leave the field of play.
 - play is restarted with a dropped ball at the place it was located when play was stopped.
6. If a player changes places with the goalkeeper without the referee's permission before the change is made:
 - play continues.
 - the players concerned are cautioned and shown the yellow card when the ball is next out of play.
7. If play is stopped by the referee to administer a caution the match is restarted by an indirect free kick, to be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Rule 4: The Players' Equipment

1. A player must not use equipment or wear anything, which is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry).
2. The basic equipment of a player is:
 - a jersey or shirt.
 - shorts.

- stockings.
 - Shinguards
 - footwear – cleats are allowed.
3. Shinguards:
 - are covered entirely by the stockings.
 - are made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, or similar substances).
 - provide a reasonable degree of protection.
 4. Goalkeepers:
 - each goalkeeper wears colors, which distinguish him from the other players, the referee and the assistant referees.

Rule 5: The Referee

1. Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Rules of the Game in connection with the match to which he/she has been appointed.
2. The Referee:
 - enforces the Rules of the Game.
 - controls the match in co-operation with the assistant referees and, where applicable, with the fourth official.
 - ensures that the ball meets the requirements of Rule 2.
 - ensures that the players' equipment meets the requirements of Rule 4.
 - acts as timekeeper and keeps a record of the match.
 - stops, suspends or terminates the match, at his/her discretion, for any infringements of the Rules.
 - stops, suspends or terminates the match because of outside interference of any kind.
 - stops the match if, in his/her opinion, a player is seriously injured and ensures that he/she is removed from the field of play.
 - allows play to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in his/her opinion, only slightly injured.
 - ensures that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from the referee, who must be satisfied that the bleeding has stopped.
 - allows play to continue when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from such an advantage and penalizes the original offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time.
 - punishes the more serious offence when a player commits more than one offence at the same time.
 - takes disciplinary action against players guilty of cautionable and sending-off offences. He/She is not obliged to take this action immediately but must do so when the ball next goes out of play.
 - takes action against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and may at his discretion, expel them from the field of play and its immediate surrounds.
 - acts on the advice of assistant referees regarding incidents, which he/she has not seen.
 - ensures that no unauthorized persons enter the field of play.
 - restarts the match after it has been stopped.

- provides the appropriate authorities with a match report, which includes information on any disciplinary action taken against players, and/or team officials and any other incidents, which occurred before, during or after the match.
3. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final.
 4. The referee may only change a decision on realizing that it is incorrect or, at his/her discretion, on the advice of an assistant referee, provided that he/she has not restarted play.

Rule 6: The Duration of the Match

1. The match lasts two equal periods of 20 minutes.
2. The half-time interval must not exceed 3 minutes.
3. The duration of the half-time interval may be altered only with the consent of the referee.
4. Allowance is made in either period for all time lost through:
 - substitution(s).
 - assessment of injury to players.
 - removal of injured players from the field of play for treatment.
 - wasting time.
 - any other cause.
5. The allowance for time lost is at the discretion of the referee.
6. If a penalty kick has to be taken or retaken, the duration of either half is extended until the penalty kick is completed.

Rule 7: The Start and Restart of Play

1. A coin is tossed and the team which wins the toss may choose which goal it will attack in the first half of the match or to take the kick-off to start the match.
2. If the toss winning team chooses a side to attack then the other team takes the kick-off to start the match.
3. If the toss winning team chooses to take the kick-off then the other team may choose a side to attack.
4. In the second half of the match the teams change ends, attack the opposite goals and the kick-off is given to the other team.
5. A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting play:
 - at the start of the match.
 - after a goal has been scored.
 - at the start of the second half of the match.
 - at the start of each period of extra time, where applicable.
6. A goal may be scored directly from the kick-off.

Procedure:

- all players are in their own half of the field.
 - the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - the ball is stationary on the center mark.
 - the referee gives a signal.
 - the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward.
 - the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
7. After a team scores a goal, the other team takes the kick-off.

8. A dropped ball is a way of restarting the match after a temporary stoppage, which becomes necessary, while the ball is in play, for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Rules of the Game.

Procedure

- the referee drops the ball at the place where it was located when play was stopped.
- play restarts when the ball touches the ground.

Rule 8: The Ball In and Out of Play

1. The ball is out of play when:
 - it has wholly crossed the goal line or touchline whether on the ground or in the air.
 - play has been stopped by the referee.
2. The ball is in play at all other times, including when:
 - it rebounds from a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains in the field of play.

Rule 9: The Method of Scoring

1. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the Rules of the Game has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal.
 - Win = 3 points
 - Tie = 1 point
 - Loss = 0 points
2. Playoff Overtimes
 - League playoffs and championship games:
 - I. Scores tied after regulation one five minute period will be played Golden goal rule
 - II. If still tied, one set of five penalty kicks per team taken alternately.
 - III. If still tied, each team shall kick one penalty kick in a sudden-death fashion following the same kicking order as before.

Rule 10: Fouls and Misconduct

1. A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following six 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 an opponent.
 - strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
 - pushes an opponent.
2. A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following four offences:
 - tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.
 - holds an opponent.
 - spits at an opponent.
 - handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).
3. A direct free kick is taken from where the offence occurred.

4. A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above ten offences is committed by a player inside his own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play.
5. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following five offences:
 - takes more than four steps while controlling the ball with his hands, before releasing it from his possession.
 - touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player.
 - 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 directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate.
 - wastes time.
6. An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee:
 - plays in a dangerous manner.
 - impedes the progress of an opponent.
 - prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands.
 - commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Rule 10.6, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player.
7. The indirect free kick is taken from where the offence occurred.
8. A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:
 - is guilty of unsporting behavior.
 - shows dissent by word or action.
 - persistently infringes the Rules of the Game.
 - delays the restart of play.
 - fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick.
 - enters or re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission.
 - deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission.
9. A player is sent off and shown the red card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:
 - is guilty of serious foul play.
 - is guilty of violent conduct.
 - spits at an opponent or any other person.
 - denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area).
 - denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
 - uses offensive, insulting or abusive language.
 - receives a second caution in the same match.

Rule 11: Free Kicks

1. Free kicks are either direct or indirect.
2. For both direct and indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
3. The Direct Free Kick.

- if a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal is awarded.
 - if a direct free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.
4. The referee indicates an indirect free kick by raising his arm above his head. He maintains his arm in that position until the kick has been taken and the ball has touched another player or goes out of play.
 5. A goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal.
 - if an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.
 - if an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.
 6. Free Kick Outside the Penalty Area.
 - all opponents are at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
 - the free kick is taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

Rule 12: The Penalty Kick

1. A penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits one of the ten offences for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play: Rule 11.2.
2. A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.
3. Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each half or at the end of periods of extra time.

Rule 13: The Throw-In

1. A throw-in is a method of restarting play.
2. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
3. At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:
 - faces the field of play.
 - has part of each foot either on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline.
 - uses both hands.
 - delivers the ball from behind and over his head.
4. The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.
5. The ball is in play immediately it enters the field of play.
6. The throw-in shall occur where the ball exited the field.

Rule 14: The Goal Kick

1. A goal kick is a method of restarting play.
2. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.
3. A goal kick is awarded when:
 - the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Rule 9.
4. Procedure
 - the ball is kicked from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team.

- opponents remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.
- the kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- the ball is in play when it is kicked directly beyond the penalty area.

Rule 15: The Corner Kick

1. A corner kick is a method of restarting play.
2. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team.
3. A corner kick is awarded when:
 - the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Rule 9.

Procedure

- the ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
- the corner flag post is not moved.
- opponents remain at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- the ball is kicked by a player of the attacking team.
- the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
- the kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.