

BCISL

LAWS OF THE GAME

2025/2026

The contents of this document have been composed of the IFAB Laws of the Game 2025/2026 and previous editions of the BCISL Laws of the Game.

Law 1 - The Field of Play

Field Markings:

All lines belong to the areas of which they are boundaries.

The Playing Area:

- Is bounded by the two Touch Lines and the Two Goal Lines.
- The surface of the Playing Area should be in good condition.
- Is accessible to Players. Registered Team Members may enter the Playing Area with permission from the referee.

The Field of Play is accessible to:

- Players,
- Registered Team Members included in the Official Team List,
- NSC Staff.

The Substitution Zone

- Shall extend 1m from the designated seating area into the Playing Area, and 1m from both sides of the designated seating area along the touchline.

The Designated Seating Area:

- Acts as the Technical Area,
- Extends no more than 1m from either side of the bench, and no more than 1m from the touchline.
- There may be no more than two non players in the Designated Seating Area during the match. This includes undressed players.
- No unregistered persons can be in the Designated Seating Area.

The Goal Area and Penalty Area:

- Are the same dimensions,
- Are bounded by the same lines.

The Penalty Mark:

- Is located above the Penalty Area,

5m above the Penalty Mark is a line that will be used to determine encroachment of players during a Penalty Kick.

Goals:

- Should be on the goal line,
- Centered to the Penalty Mark,
- If a Goal becomes damaged play should be stopped until it is repaired, if it cannot be repaired the match must be abandoned.

If play is stopped due to the damage play will be restarted with a dropped ball.

Law 2 – The Ball

Qualities and Measurements:

All Balls must be:

- Spherical
- Made of a suitable material
- Have a pressure equal to 8.5 lbs/in² – 15.6 lbs/in²
- Replacement of a Defective Ball:

If the ball becomes defective while the ball is in play:

- Play is stopped and the ball is replaced
- Play is restarted with a dropped ball

If the ball becomes defective at or before a restart the restart is retaken.

If the ball becomes defective during a penalty kick or penalties (penalty shootout) as it moves forward and before it touches a player, crossbar or goalposts, the penalty kick is retaken.

Law 3 – The Players

Number of Players:

A match will be played by two teams consisting of:

- In gender specific divisions, six players; of which one must be a goalkeeper. Play may not start or continue if a team has less than four players.
- In Co-Ed divisions seven players, three female players and three male players, with a goalkeeper, the gender of the goalkeeper is not relevant. Play

may not start or continue if a team has less than five players. A male player may not replace a female player, nor may a female player replace a male player.

In the event one or both teams have less than the required number to start. The referee will wait five minutes after the scheduled kick off time to declare if the match is to be abandoned. If abandoned, the match will be considered forfeited by one or both teams.

Substitution Procedure:

On-the-fly substitutions are permitted in all games. On-the-fly substitutions are substitutions made while the ball is in play, they do not require direct permission from the referee. Teams have unlimited substitutions. Players may also make substitutions during a stoppage in play with the referees permission.

- On-the-fly substitution procedure:
- May be made when the ball is in play,
- May only be completed when the player substituting out is within their team's substitution zone,

Changing the Goalkeeper:

Any 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.

Offences and Sanctions

During an on-the-fly substitution, a substitute may not enter the Playing Area until the player being substituted out has entered their team's substitution zone, or left the Playing Area and has returned to their team's Designated Seating Area.

The player(s) or substitute(s) involved in an on-the-fly substitution may not play the ball or become apart of active play while both are in the Substitution Zone.

If an illegal on-the-fly substitution occurs the referee:

- Stops play
- Awards an indirect free kick where the offence occurred
- Cautions the substitute entering/entered the playing area

If a substitution is made during the half-time interval, it must be completed before the match is restarted. If the referee is not informed, the substitute may continue to play, no disciplinary action is taken, and the matter is reported to the appropriate authorities.

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
- No disciplinary action is taken if the change occurs during the half-time interval or before the start of penalties (penalty shoot-out)

Players and Substitutes Sent off:

- A player sent off may not reenter the match or remain on the field of play.
- A player sent off may be replaced by a substitute.

Team Captain:

Each team must have a captain who may wear an identifying armband. The team captain has no special status or privileges but has a degree of responsibility for the behavior of their team.

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment

Safety

- A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous.
- All items of jewellery 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. If a player is wearing or using unauthorised/dangerous equipment or jewellery, the referee must order the player to:
 - Remove the item
 - Leave the playing area 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.

Compulsory Equipment

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

- A shirt with sleeves
- Shorts
- Socks
- Shin guards – these must be made of a suitable material and size to provide reasonable protection and be covered by the socks. Players are responsible for the suitability of their shin guards.
- Footwear

A player whose footwear or shin guard is lost accidentally must replace it as soon as possible and no later than when the ball next goes out of play. The ball may be played, and goal may be scored by a player who has lost a piece of their equipment.

Other Equipment

Non-dangerous protective equipment, made of a soft lightweight padded material are permitted.

Offences and Sanctions

If a player who is instructed to leave the field to correct a piece of equipment re-enters the match without complying with the referee's order should be cautioned, if play is stopped to issue the caution play will be restarted with an indirect freekick from where the ball was when play was stopped.

Law 5 – The Referee

The Authority of the Referee

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

Decisions of the Referee

The referee's decisions will be made to the best of their ability in accordance with the BCISL 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 BCISL 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 must always be respected. The referee may not change a restart decision on realising that it is incorrect if play has restarted or the referee has signalled the end of the first or second half and left the field of play or abandoned the match.

Powers and Duties

The referee:

- enforces the Laws of the Game
- 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 and after the match
- supervises and/or indicates the restart of play
- Allows play to continue if an offence occurs and believes that the non-offending team will gain an advantage, and will punish the offending team if the advantage does not play out 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out)). 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 from entering the field of play at the start of the match until after the match has ended, including during the half-time interval, and penalties (penalty shoot-out)

Takes action against team officials who fail to act in a responsible manner and warns or shows a yellow card for a caution or a red card for a sending-off from the field of play and its immediate surrounds, including the designated seating area; if

the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach present in the designated seating area will receive the sanction.

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,
- 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 lighting is inadequate an object thrown by a spectator hits the referee, 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 interference was by the attacking team,
- 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

Referee Equipment:

A referee must have the following compulsory equipment:

- A whistle
- Red and Yellow card
- A means to record match events
- Referees are not permitted to wear jewellery.

Law 6 – The Duration of the Match

Periods of play

A match lasts for two equal halves that are at most 25 minutes.

Half-time interval

Should last no more than 5 minutes from the end of the first half until the beginning of the second half.

Allowance for time lost

No time should be added onto a match

Penalty kick

If a penalty kick has to be taken the half is extended until it has been taken.

Law 7 – The Start and Restart of Play

A kick-off starts both halves of a match, 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. 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.

Procedure:

- the referee tosses a coin and the team that wins the toss decides which goal to attack in the first half or to take the kick-off
- depending on the above, their opponents take the kick-off or decide which goal to attack in the first half
- the team that decided which goal to attack in the first half takes the kick-off to start the second half

- for the second half, the teams change ends and attack the opposite goal
- 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 5m 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 opposing team from kick-off; if the ball directly enters the kickers goal a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

If the player taking the kick-off touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect freekick is awarded to the opposing team if it's a handball offence a direct freekick is given. In the event of any other offence the kick-off is retaken.

Dropped ball

If, when play was stopped:

- the ball was inside the penalty area, the referee drops it for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area
- the ball was outside the penalty area, the referee drops it for one player of the team that has or would have gained possession if this can be determined by the referee; otherwise, it is dropped for one player of the team that last touched it. The ball is dropped at its position when play was stopped
- all other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play The ball is in play when it touches the ground
- 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 enters the team's goal

Law 8 – The Ball in and out of Play

Ball out of play

The ball is out of play when:

- it has struck the roof or overhead structure:
 - the referee stops play
 - awards an indirect freekick below the spot the ball struck unless it is in the penalty area. If the spot is in the penalty area the indirect freekick will be played 3 m from the point on the penalty area nearest to where the ball struck the structure.
- it has wholly passed over the goal line or touchline on the ground or in the air
- play has been stopped by the referee
- it touches a referee, remains on the field of play and:
 - a team starts a promising attack or
 - the ball goes directly into the goal or
 - the team in possession of the ball changes

In all these cases, play is restarted with a dropped ball

Ball in play

The ball is in play at all other times when it touches a referee and when it rebounds off a goalpost, crossbar and remains on the field of play. If, without intending to interfere with play unfairly, a team official, substitute, substituted or sent-off player or player who is temporarily off the field of play (injury, adjusting equipment etc.) touches the ball while it is still in play but when it is clearly leaving the playing area, this is penalized with an indirect free kick ; there is no sanction.

Law 9 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

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 offence has been committed by the team scoring the goal.

If the goalkeeper throws the ball directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.

If a referee signals a goal before the ball has passed wholly over the goal line, play is restarted with a dropped ball.

Winning Team

The team scoring the greater number of goals is the winner. If both teams have an equal number of goals or no goals, and the match does not require a winner the match is a draw.

In a match that requires a winner the match the match will go straight to penalties.

Pre Penalty Shoot-out Procedure:

- Unless there are other concerns the referee tosses a coin to decide the goal at which the kicks will be taken, which may only be changed for safety reasons or if the goal is broken.
- The referee tosses a coin again, and the team that wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick
- With the exception of a substitute for a goalkeeper who is unable to continue, only players who are on the field of play or are temporarily off the field of play (injury, adjusting equipment etc.) at the end of the match are eligible to take kicks
- Each team is responsible for selecting from the eligible players the order in which they will take the kicks. The referee is not informed of the order

If at the end of the match and before or during the kicks one team has a greater number of players than its opponents, it must reduce its numbers to the same number as its opponents and the referee must be informed of the name and number of each player excluded. Any excluded player is not eligible to take part in the kicks (except as outlined below)

A goalkeeper who is unable to continue before or during the kicks may be replaced by a player excluded to equalise the number of players or, if their team has not used its maximum permitted number of substitutes, a named substitute, but the replaced goalkeeper takes no further part and may not take a kick

If the goalkeeper has already taken a kick, the replacement may not take a kick until the next round of kicks.

Penalty Shoot-out Procedure:

- Only eligible players and referees are permitted to remain on the field of play
- All eligible players, except the player taking the kick and the two goalkeepers, must remain within the centre circle
- The goalkeeper of the kicker must remain on the field of play, outside the penalty area, on the goal line where it meets the penalty area boundary line
- An eligible player may change places with the goalkeeper
- The kick is completed when the ball stops moving, goes out of play or the referee stops play for any offence; the kicker may not play the ball a second time
- The referee keeps a record of the kicks
- If the goalkeeper commits an offence and, as a result, the kick is retaken, the goalkeeper is warned for the first offence and cautioned for any subsequent offence(s)
- If the kicker is penalised for an offence committed after the referee has signalled for the kick to be taken, that kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is cautioned
- If both the goalkeeper and the kicker commit an offence at the same time, the kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is cautioned.

Guidelines:

- In a gender specific match each team will take 3 kicks
- In a Co-ed match each team will have 4 kickers two women and two men. The gender of the first kicker is irrelevant, but each team must alternate between genders for the remainder of the penalty shoot-out. Goalkeepers are exempt from this rule.
- Each kick is taken by a different player, and all eligible players must take a kick before any player can take a second kick
- If, before both teams have taken their divisions number of kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its number of kicks, no more kicks are taken
- If, after both teams have taken the minimum number of kicks, the scores are level, kicks continue until one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks
- The above principle continues for any subsequent sequence of kicks but a team may change the order of kickers

Penalties (penalty shoot-out) must not be delayed for a player who leaves the field of play. The player's kick will be forfeited (not scored) if the player does not return in

time to take a kick Substitutions and sending-offs during penalties (penalty shoot-out)

Substitutions and sending-offs during penalties:

- A goalkeeper who is sent off must be replaced by an eligible player
- A player other than the goalkeeper who is unable to continue may not be replaced
- The referee must not abandon the match if a team is reduced to fewer than the divisions minimum number of players

Law 11 – Fouls and Misconduct

Direct and indirect free kicks can only be awarded for offences when the ball is in play.

Direct free kick

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

- Challenges or attempts to challenge an opponent for the ball by leaving the feet or sliding (slide tackle) except:
 - A goalkeeper sliding inside their own penalty area.

If a goalkeeper while challenging an opponent for the ball starts sliding inside the penalty area and continues outside the penalty area a direct free kick is given

- charges
- jumps at
- kicks or attempts to kick
- pushes
- strikes or attempts to strike (including head-butt)
- tackles or challenges
- trips or attempts to trip If an offence involves contact, it is penalised by a direct free kick.
- If an offence involves contact it is penalized with a direct free kick.

Careless is when a player shows a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge or acts without precaution. No disciplinary sanction is needed

Reckless is when a player acts with disregard to the danger to, or consequences for, an opponent and must be cautioned

Using excessive force is when a player exceeds the necessary use of force and/or endangers the safety of an opponent and must be sent off

A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences:

- a handball offence (except for the goalkeeper within their penalty area).
- Holds an opponent
- Impedes an opponent with contact
- Bites or spits at someone on the team lists or a referee
- Throws an object at the ball, an opponent, or a referee, or makes contact with the ball with a held object
- Handling the ball

For the purposes of determining handball offences, the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit. Not every touch of a player's hand/arm with the ball is an offence. It is an offence if a player:

- deliberately touches the ball with their hand/arm, for example moving the hand/arm towards the ball
- touches the ball with their hand/arm when it has made their body unnaturally bigger. A player is considered to have made their body unnaturally bigger when the position of their hand/arm is not a consequence of, or justifiable by, the player's body movement for that specific situation. By having their hand/arm in such a position, the player takes a risk of their hand/arm being hit by the ball and being penalised
- scores in the opponents' goal:
 - directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper
 - immediately after the ball has touched their hand/arm, even if accidental The goalkeeper has the same restrictions on handling the ball as any other player outside the penalty area. If the goalkeeper handles the ball inside their penalty area when not permitted to do so, an indirect free kick is awarded but there is no disciplinary sanction. However, if the offence is playing the ball a second time (with or without the hand/arm) after a restart before it touches another player, the goalkeeper must be sanctioned if the offence stops a promising

attack or denies an opponent or the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity

Indirect free kick

An indirect free kick is awarded if a player:

- deflects the ball off an over head structure
- impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made
- is guilty of dissent, using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s) or other verbal offences
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from the hands or kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it
- initiates a deliberate trick for the ball to be passed (including from a free kick or goal kick) to the goalkeeper with the head, chest, knee etc. to circumvent the Law, whether or not the goalkeeper touches the ball with the hands; the goalkeeper is penalised if responsible for initiating the deliberate trick
- commits any other offence, not mentioned in the Laws, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player

An indirect free kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

- touches the ball with the hand/arm after releasing it and before it has touched another player
- touches the ball with the hand/arm, unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after:
- it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate

Playing in a dangerous manner

Playing in a dangerous manner is any action that, while trying to play the ball, threatens the safety of someone and includes preventing a nearby opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury. A scissors or bicycle kick is allowed if it is not dangerous to an opponent.

Impeding the progress of an opponent without contact:

Impeding the progress of an opponent without contact Impeding the progress of an opponent means moving into the opponent's path to obstruct, block, slow down or force a change of direction when the ball is not within playing distance of either player. All players have a right to their position on the field of play; being in the way

of an opponent is not the same as moving into the way of an opponent. A player may shield the ball by taking a position between an opponent and the ball if the ball is within playing distance and the opponent is not held off with the arms or body. If the ball is within playing distance, the player may be fairly charged by an opponent.

Corner kick:

A corner kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds before releasing it. A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with their hand(s)/ arm(s) when:

- the ball is between their hands/arms or between their hand(s)/arm(s) and any surface (e.g. ground, own body)
- holding the ball in their outstretched open hand(s)
- bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air

The referee will decide when the goalkeeper has control of the ball and the eight seconds begin and will visually count down the last five seconds with a raised hand. A goalkeeper cannot be challenged by an opponent when in control of the ball when in control of the ball with their hand(s) or arm(s).



Countdown the last 5 seconds of the 8-second restriction for goalkeepers holding the ball with their arm(s) and/or hand(s).

Disciplinary action

The referee has the authority to take disciplinary action from entering the field of play for pre-match inspection until leaving the field of play after the match ends (This includes penalty shoot-outs).

If, before entering the field of play at the start of the match, a player or team official commits a sending-off offence, the referee has the authority to prevent the player or team official taking part in the match (see Law 3.6); the referee will report any other misconduct. A player or team official who commits a cautionable or sending-off offence, either on or off the field of play, is disciplined according to the offence. The yellow card communicates a caution and the red card communicates a sending-off. Only a player, substitute, substituted player or team official may be shown the red or yellow card.

Delaying the Restart to show a card

Once the referee has decided to caution or send-off a player play must not be restarted until the sanction has been administered, unless the non-offending team takes a quick free kick, has a clear goal-scoring opportunity and the referee has not started the disciplinary sanction procedure. The sanction is administered at the next stoppage; if the offence was denying the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, the player is cautioned; if the offence was stopping a promising attack then then the player is not cautioned.

Advantage

If the referee plays advantage for an offence which a caution/sending-off would have been issued had play been stopped, this caution/ sending-off must be issued when the ball is next out of play. However, if the offence was denying the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, the player is cautioned for unsporting behaviour; if the offence was interfering with or stopping a promising attack, the player is not cautioned. Advantage should not be applied in situations involving serious foul play, violent conduct or a second cautionable offence unless there is a clear opportunity to score a goal. The referee must send off the player when the ball is next out of play, but if the player plays the ball or challenges/interferes with an opponent, the referee will stop play, send off the player and restart with an indirect free kick, unless the player commits a more serious offence.

If a defender starts holding an attacker outside the penalty area and continues holding inside the penalty area the referee must award a penalty kick.

Cautionable offences:

A player is cautioned if guilty of:

- delaying the restart of play
- dissent by word or action
- entering, re-entering or deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission
- failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a dropped ball, corner kick, free kick or throw-in
- persistent offences (no specific number or pattern of offences constitutes 'persistent')
- unsporting behaviour
- A substitute or substituted player is cautioned if guilty of:
 - delaying the restart of play
 - dissent by word or action
 - entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission
 - unsporting behaviour

Where two separate cautionable offences are committed (even in close proximity), they should result in two cautions, for example if a player enters the field of play without permission and stops a promising attack they should receive two cautions.

Unsporting behaviour

A player must be cautioned for the following offences:

- if a player feigns an injury or pretends to have been fouled in an attempt to deceive the referee
- changes places with the goalkeeper during play or without the referee's permission (see Law 3)
- commits in a reckless manner a direct free kick offence
- handles the ball to interfere with or stop a promising attack, except where the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence

- commits any other offence which interferes with or stops a promising attack, except where the referee awards a penalty kick for an offence which was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball
- denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing an offence which was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball and the referee awards a penalty kick
- handles the ball in an attempt to score a goal (whether or not the attempt is successful) or in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent a goal
- makes unauthorised marks on the field of play
- plays the ball when leaving the field of play after being given permission to leave
- shows a lack of respect for the game
- initiates a deliberate trick for the ball to be passed (including from a free kick or goal kick) to the goalkeeper with the head, chest, knee etc. to circumvent the Law, whether or not the goalkeeper touches the ball with the hands; the goalkeeper is cautioned if responsible for initiating the deliberate trick
- verbally distracts an opponent during play or at a restart

Celebration of a Goal

must not be excessive, provocative, or inflammatory. Players may leave the field of play to celebrate but must return in a timely manner. Players must be cautioned even if the goal is disallowed for the following offences:

- acting in a provocative, derisory, or inflammatory manner
- covering the head or face with a mask or similar item
- removing the shirt or covering the head with the shirt

Delaying the restart of play

Referees must caution players who delay the restart of play by:

- appearing to take a kick in and suddenly leaving it for a teammate
- excessively delaying a restart

- kicking or carrying the ball away, or provoking a confrontation by deliberately touching the ball after the referee has stopped play
- taking a free kick from the wrong position to force a retake

Sending off offences

A player or substitute who commits any of the following offences must be sent off:

- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence outside their own penalty area
- denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick (unless as outlined below)
- serious foul play
- biting or spitting at someone
- violent conduct
- using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
- receiving a second caution in the same match

A sent off player or substitute must leave the vicinity of the playing field area and the designated seating area.

Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO)

Where a player commits an offence against an opponent within their own penalty area which denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned if the offence was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball; in all other circumstances (e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.), the offending player must be sent off.

Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offence, the player is sent off wherever the offence occurs (except a goalkeeper within their own penalty area).

Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned.

A player, sent-off player, substitute or substituted player who enters the field of play without the required referee's permission and interferes with play or an opponent and denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity is guilty of a sending-off offence. The following must be considered:

- distance between the offence and the goal
- general direction of the play
- likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball
- location and number of defenders
- Serious foul play

A tackle or challenge that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality must be sanctioned as serious foul play.

Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, side, or behind using one or both feet with excessive force or endangers the safety of an opponent is guilty of serious foul play.

Violent conduct

Violent conduct is when a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a team-mate, team official, referee, spectator, or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made. In addition, a player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.

Team officials

Where an offence is committed by someone from the technical area or designated seating area and the team member cannot be identified the most senior team official present in the designated seating area will receive the sanction.

A team official who commits the following should usually receive a warning, but blatant or repeated offences should result in a caution or sending off:

- entering the field of play in a respectful/non-confrontational manner
- minor/low-level disagreement with a sanction

Cautions for team officials

- clearly/persistently not respecting the confines of their team's designated seating area
- delaying the restart of play by their team
- deliberately entering the designated seating area of the opposing team (non-confrontational)
- dissent by word or action including:
 - throwing/kicking drinks bottles or other objects
 - action(s) which show(s) a clear lack of respect for the referee
 - excessively/persistently gesturing for a red or yellow card
 - acting in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- persistent unacceptable behaviour (including repeated warning offences)
- showing a lack of respect for the game

Sending-off offences for team officials

Sending-off offences include (but are not limited to):

- delaying the restart of play by the opposing team e.g. holding onto the ball, kicking the ball away, obstructing the movement of a player
- deliberately leaving the designated seating area to:
 - show dissent towards, or remonstrate with, the referee
 - act in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- entering the opposing designated seating area in an aggressive or confrontational manner
- deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play
- entering the field of play to:
 - confront a referee (including at half-time and full-time)
 - interfere with play, an opposing player or the referee
 - physical or aggressive behaviour (including spitting or biting) towards an opposing player, substitute, team official, referee, spectator, or any other person (e.g. ball boy/girl, security, or competition official etc.)
 - receiving a second caution in the same match
 - using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
 - violent conduct

Offences when an object is thrown

The referee makes the appropriate disciplinary action:

Reckless – caution for unsporting behaviour

Using excessive force – send-off for violent conduct

Restarting play after a foul or misconduct

If the ball is in play and a player commits a physical offence inside the field of play against:

- an opponent – an indirect or direct free kick or penalty kick
- a team-mate, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, team official or a referee – a direct free kick or penalty kick

All verbal offences are penalised with an indirect free kick.

If the referee stops play for an offence committed by a player, inside or outside the field of play, against an outside agent, play is restarted with a dropped ball, unless an indirect free kick is awarded for leaving the field of play without the referee's permission; the indirect free kick is taken from the point on the boundary line where the player left the field of play.

If, when the ball is in play:

- a player commits an offence against a referee or an opposing player, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, or team official outside the field of play or;
- a substitute, substituted or sent-off player, or team official commits an offence against, or interferes with, an opposing player or a referee outside the field of play, play is restarted with a free kick on the boundary line nearest to where the offence/interference occurred; for direct free kick offences, a penalty kick is awarded if this is within the offenders own penalty area.

If an offence is committed outside the field of play by a player against a player, substitute, substituted player or team official of their own team, play is restarted:

- with an indirect free kick on the boundary line closest to where the offence occurred.

If a player makes contact with the ball with an object (boot, shin guard etc.) held in the hand, play is restarted with a direct free kick (or penalty kick). If a player who is on or off the field of play throws or kicks an object (other than the match ball) at an opposing player, or throws or kicks an object (including a ball) at an opposing substitute, substituted or sent-off player, team official, or a referee or the match ball, play is restarted with a direct free kick from the position where the object struck or would have struck the person or the ball. If this position is off the field of play, the free kick is taken on the nearest point on the boundary line; a penalty kick is awarded if this is within the offender's penalty area.

If a substitute, substituted or sent-off player, player temporarily off the field of play or team official throws or kicks an object onto the field of play and it interferes with play, an opponent or referee, play is restarted with a direct free kick (or penalty kick) where the object interfered with play or struck or would have struck the opponent, referee or ball.

Law 12 - Free Kicks

Types of free kick

Direct and indirect free kicks are awarded to the opposing team of a player, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, or team official guilty of an offence.

Indirect free kick signal

The referee indicates an indirect free kick by raising the arm above the head; this signal is maintained until the kick has been taken and the ball touches another player, goes out of play or it is clear that a goal cannot be scored directly. An indirect free kick must be retaken if the referee fails to signal that the kick is indirect and the ball is kicked directly into the goal.

Ball enters the goal

- If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal is awarded.
- If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.
- If a direct or indirect free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded.

Procedure:

All free kicks are taken from the place where the offence occurred, except:

- indirect free kicks to the attacking team for an offence inside the opponents' goal area are taken from the nearest point on the goal area line which runs parallel to the goal line free kicks to the defending team in their goal area may be taken from anywhere in the goal area.
- If a player commits an offence off the field of play, play is restarted with a free kick taken on the boundary line nearest to where the offence occurred; for direct free kick offences, a penalty kick is awarded if the offence occurs within the offenders penalty area.
- Where the law designates another position (see laws 11 and 3).

The ball:

Must be stationary and the kicker must not touch the ball until it touches another player.

Is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.

Until the ball is in play opponents must remain:

- At least 5m from the ball
- Outside the penalty area for freekicks inside the opponent's penalty area
- Where three or more defending team players form a 'wall,' all attacking team players must remain at least 1m away from the wall until the ball is in play.

A free kick can be taken by lifting the ball with a foot or both feet simultaneously.

Feinting to take a free kick to confuse opponents is permitted as a part of football.

If a player, while correctly taking a free kick, deliberately kicks the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball again but not in a careless or reckless manner or using excessive force, the referee allows play to continue.

Offences and sanctions

If, when a free kick is taken, an opponent is closer to the ball than the required distance, the kick is retaken unless the advantage can be applied; but if a player takes a free kick quickly and an opponent who is less than 9.15 m (10 yds) from the ball intercepts it, the referee allows play to continue. However, an opponent who deliberately prevents a free kick being taken quickly must be cautioned for delaying the restart of play.

- If, when a free kick is taken, an attacking team player is less than 1 m (1 yd) from a 'wall' formed by three or more defending team players, an indirect free kick is awarded.
- If, when a free kick is taken by the defending team inside its penalty area, any opponents are inside the penalty area because they did not have time to leave, the referee allows play to continue. If an opponent who is in the penalty area when the free kick is taken, or enters the penalty area before the ball is in play, touches, or challenges for the ball before it is in play, the free kick is retaken.

- If, after the ball is in play, the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded; if the kicker commits a handball offence:
 - a direct free kick is awarded
 - a penalty kick is awarded if the offence occurred inside the kicker's penalty area unless the kicker was the goalkeeper in which case an indirect free kick is awarded

Law 13 – The Penalty Kick

A penalty kick is awarded if a player commits a direct free kick offence inside their penalty area or off the field as outlined in Laws 11 and 12.

Procedure

The ball must be stationary, with part of the ball touching or overhanging the centre of the penalty mark, and the goalposts, crossbar and goal net must not be moving.

The player taking the penalty kick must be clearly identified.

The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must not behave in a way that unfairly distracts the kicker, e.g. delay the taking of the kick or touch the goalposts, crossbar, or goal net.

The players other than the kicker and goalkeeper must be:

- at least 5m from the penalty mark
- behind the penalty mark
- inside the field of play
- outside the penalty area

After the players have taken positions in accordance with this Law, the referee signals for the penalty kick to be taken. The player taking the kick must remain within 3m of the ball (dashed line). The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward; backheeling is permitted provided the ball moves forward. When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot touching, in line with, or behind, the goal line.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.

The kicker must not play the ball again until it has touched another player.

The penalty kick is completed when the ball stops moving, goes out of play or the referee stops play for any offence.

Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken and completed at the end of each half of the match. When additional time is allowed, the penalty kick is completed when, after the kick has been taken, the ball stops moving, goes out of play, is played by any player (including the kicker) other than the defending goalkeeper, or the referee stops play for an offence by the kicker or the kicker's team. If a defending team player (including the goalkeeper) commits an offence and the penalty is missed/saved, the penalty is retaken.

Offences and sanctions

Once the referee has signaled for a penalty kick to be taken, the kick must be taken; if it is not taken the referee may take disciplinary action before signaling again for the kick to be taken.

If, before the ball is in play, one of the following occurs:

- a team-mate of the player taking the penalty kick is penalised for encroachment only if:
 - the encroachment clearly impacted on the goalkeeper; or
 - the encroaching player plays the ball or challenges an opponent for the ball and then scores, attempts to score, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity
- a team-mate of the goalkeeper is penalised for encroachment only if:
 - the encroachment clearly impacted on the kicker; or
 - the encroaching player plays the ball or challenges an opponent for the ball and this prevents the opponents from scoring, attempting to score or create a goal scoring opportunity.

- the player taking the penalty kick or a team-mate offends:
 - if the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken
 - if the ball does not enter the goal, the referee stops play and restarts with an indirect free kick
- except for the following when play will be stopped and restarted with an indirect free kick, regardless of whether or not a goal is scored:
 - a penalty kick is kicked backwards
 - a team-mate of the identified kicker takes the kick; the referee cautions the player who took the kick
 - feinting to kick the ball once the kicker has completed the run-up (feinting in the run-up is permitted); the referee cautions the kicker

the goalkeeper offends:

- if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
- if the ball misses the goal or rebounds from the crossbar or goalpost(s), the kick is only retaken if the goalkeeper's offence clearly impacted the kicker
- if the ball is prevented from entering the goal by the goalkeeper, the kick is retaken. If the goalkeeper's offence results in the kick being retaken, the goalkeeper is warned for the first offence in the game and cautioned for any subsequent offence(s) in the game

a team-mate of the goalkeeper offends:

- if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
- if the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken

a player of both teams offends, the kick is retaken unless a player commits a more serious offence (e.g. 'illegal' feinting)

both the goalkeeper and the kicker commit an offence at the same time, the kicker is cautioned and play restarts with an indirect free kick to the defending team

If, after the penalty kick has been taken:

- the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player:
- an indirect free kick (or direct free kick for a hand ball offence) is awarded
- the ball is touched by an outside agent as it moves forward
- the kick is retaken unless the ball is going into the goal and the interference does not prevent the goalkeeper or a defending player playing the ball, in

which case the goal is awarded if the ball enters the goal (even if contact was made with the ball) unless the interference was by the attacking team

- the ball rebounds into the playing area from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalposts is then touched by an outside agent:
 - the referee stops play
 - play is restarted with a dropped ball where it last touched the outside agent.

Law 14 – The kick-in

A kick-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when the whole of the ball passes over the touchline, on the ground or in the air.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in:

- if the ball enters the opponent's goal – a goal kick is awarded
- if the ball enters the kickers goal – a corner kick is awarded

Procedure

the ball must be:

- within 2m of where it left the playing area
- stationary
- overlapping or behind the touch line
- All opponents must be at least 5 m away from the point on the touchline where the kick-in is to be taken.

Offences and sanctions

If, after the ball is in play, the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded; if the thrower commits a handball offence:

- a direct free kick is awarded
- a penalty kick is awarded if the offence occurred inside the thrower's penalty area unless the ball was handled by the defending team's goalkeeper, in which case an indirect free kick is awarded

An opponent who unfairly distracts or impedes the kicker (including moving closer than 5 m to the place where the kick-in is to be taken) is cautioned for unsporting behaviour, and if the kick-in has been taken, an indirect free kick is awarded.

Law 15 – The Goal Kick

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team, and a goal is not scored. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Procedure

The ball must be stationary. It can be kicked from anywhere inside the goal area.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves

Opponents must be outside the penalty area

Offences and sanctions

If, after the ball is in the play, the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded; if the kicker commits a handball offence:

- a direct free kick is awarded
- a penalty kick is awarded if the offence occurred inside the kicker's penalty area, unless the kicker was the goalkeeper, in which case an indirect free kick is awarded

If, when a goal kick is taken, any opponents are inside the penalty area because they did not have time to leave, the referee allows play to continue. If an opponent who is in the penalty area when the goal kick is taken, or enters the penalty area before the ball is in play, touches, or challenges for the ball before it is in play the goal kick is retaken.

If a player enters the penalty area before the ball is in play and fouls or is fouled by an opponent, the goal kick is retaken and the offender may be cautioned or sent off, depending on the offence. For any other offence, the kick is retaken.

Law 16 – The Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team, and a goal is not scored.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team; if the ball directly enters the kickers goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.

Procedure

The ball must be placed in the corner area nearest to the point where the ball passed over the goal line or the goalkeeper's position when penalised

The ball must be stationary and is kicked by a player of the attacking team

The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves; it does not need to leave the corner area

Opponents must remain at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the corner arc until the ball is in play

Offences and sanctions

If, after the ball is in play, the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded; if the kicker commits a handball offence:

- a direct free kick is awarded
- a penalty kick is awarded if the offence occurred inside the kicker's penalty area, unless the kicker was the goalkeeper, in which case an indirect free kick is awarded

If a player, while correctly taking a corner kick, deliberately kicks the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball again but not in a careless or reckless manner or using excessive force, the referee allows play to continue. For any other offence, the kick is retaken.

