



General Laws of the Game

The rules described here represent an abridged "reference" version of the complete rules of soccer. Many soccer leagues have modifications of these laws, especially for small-sided leagues (3-a-side or 4-a-side leagues). Contact coach or TMSA office for further information on league rules.

Direct kick--a kick awarded after a serious foul in which the ball can be kicked directly into opponents goal. Intentional fouls that can result in a direct kick are: 1) kicking or attempting to kick an opponent, 2) tripping, 3) jumping at an opponent, 4) charging from behind (unless the opponent is obstructing), 5) Striking or attempting to strike, 6) spitting at an opponent, 7) holding or pushing, 8) using hands on the ball.

Indirect free kick--a kick awarded after a foul where the ball must be touched by another player from either team before going into the goal. Fouls resulting in an indirect kick include: 1) dangerous play, 2) charging fairly, but when ball is not within range, 3) obstructing an opponent, 4) charging the goalkeeper, 5) when a goalkeeper delays the game by taking more than 6 seconds to put the ball in play, or has touched the ball with the hands when it was *deliberately* kicked by a teammate (not simply by a deflection off of a teammate).

Off-side--a player must not be ahead of the ball when the ball is played by a teammate in his or her direction unless two or more opponents are ahead of him or her. (Two opponents or the ball must be between the offensive player and the goal). Offside is judged at the moment the ball is kicked. A player cannot be offside when in his or her own half of the field, or if the player receives the ball from a throw-in, goal kick, or corner kick. Off side law is generally not in effect for younger players (3-a-side or 4-a-side games).

Penalty kick--a penalty kick is awarded when the defending team commits a foul which results in a direct free kick inside the penalty area. All players except the goalkeeper and the kicker must stay outside the penalty area at least 10 yards away from the penalty mark.

Corner kicks--when the defending team sends the ball over their goal line, the attacking team restarts play by kicking the ball from the corner closest to where the ball went out. Opponents must be 10 yards away until the ball travels its circumference. Another player must touch the ball before the kicker can play it again. A goal can be scored directly from the corner kick.

Goal kicks--when the attacking team sends the ball over the goal line, the defending team is awarded a goal kick. The kick must leave the penalty area to be in play. It must be touched by another player before the kicker can play it again. No opponents may be in the penalty area when the kick is taken.

Yellow card/Red Card--players can be warned by the referee and ejected from the game if they use violent conduct, create a serious foul, or use abusive language. Players can be warned or ejected for: repeated misconduct after a caution, entering or leaving the field without the referee's permission, disagreeing with the referee, or for unsportsmanlike conduct toward anyone. A yellow card is a warning. A red card is an ejection.

Out of bounds--the ball is out of play when it has completely crossed the touch-line or the end line.

Throw-in--a throw-in is taken to restart the game after the ball goes out of bounds past the touch-line. It is taken from the point where the ball crossed the line. The ball is thrown with two hands from behind the head. Both feet must be on the ground on or behind the touch-line.

Advantage - when the referee allows a foul to occur without penalty or stoppage of play. Referee allows the offensive team to continue play if they have an advantage over the defense.