



FOOTBALL
FEDERATION
AUSTRALIA

LAWS OF THE GAME 2019/20



IFAB[®] THE INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD



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**FOOTBALL
FEDERATION
AUSTRALIA**

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INTRO



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 means that the potential change will usually be tested, as with the video assistant referee (VAR) and additional 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 and 2017/18, 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 current Law revision

The 2016/17 revision of the Laws of the Game started the most far-reaching and comprehensive period of Law changes in The IFAB's history. The aim is to make the Laws clearer, more accessible and to ensure they reflect the needs of the modern game at all levels.

Many of the changes are the result of suggestions from individuals, groups and national FAs from around the world which have been reviewed by The IFAB's Football and Technical Advisory Panels to ensure that all areas of football contribute to the evolution of the Laws, as the Laws are for everyone involved in the game, not just the referees.

The most recent changes have extended many of the principles established in the 2016/17 revision and, as outlined in the '*play fair!*' strategy, have tried to improve the game's attractiveness and the levels of behaviour. In this context, the 2017 AGM approved some significant changes to help develop the lower levels of football, including:

- extending the flexibility of national FAs to modify some of the 'organisational' Laws to help promote football in their countries
- introducing the option to use temporary dismissals (sin bins) as an alternative sanction to a caution (YC) in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots (lowest levels) football
- extending the use of return substitutes to youth, veterans and disability football (they are already permitted in grassroots football).

In March 2018, The IFAB AGM approved a further series of changes, the two most significant of which were competition options allowing an additional substitute in extra time and the use of video assistant referees (VARs).

The option to use an additional substitute in extra time has benefited football at all levels as the extra 'fresh' player can both save another player from the possibility of exhaustion/injury and increase the chances of the game being decided in extra time.

The introduction of VARs has been the biggest revolution in professional football for more than a century. Given that it took football many years of debate before it took the tentative steps to see if technology could assist decision-making without destroying the game's almost non-stop flow of action and emotion, it has been a remarkably fast 'revolution'.

The first VAR match took place in New Jersey, NY, USA on 12 August 2016 and, remarkably, only 23 months later, VARs were being used in the 2018 FIFA World Cup™ final in Moscow. VARs will never solve every 'dispute', as so many decisions are subjective, but its adoption by most of the world's major footballing countries demonstrates that football believes that VARs bring greater fairness and improve player behaviour.

Many of the Law changes for 2019/20 will directly and positively affect the way the game is played and its image, e.g.:

- more constructive play at goal kicks as the ball no longer has to leave the penalty area before it can be played
- attacking players will not be allowed into the defensive 'wall' to cause disruption and conflict (which also delays the game)
- a fairer dropped ball procedure will stop the current 'abuses' – a dropped ball will also be given if the ball hits the referee and goes into the goal, the team in possession changes, or a new attack begins

As part of The IFAB's on-going determination to use the Laws to improve behaviour and the image of the game, misbehaving team officials will now receive a yellow or red card and, if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach will get the card.

The IFAB will continue to experiment with significant Law changes. Most of the experiments so far have been successful but the so-called 'AB-BA' system of kicks from the penalty mark – where the team taking the 2nd kick alternated – proved not to be especially popular, primarily because it was complicated and football is essentially a simple (and traditional!) game, so it has been discontinued.

The future

The IFAB's '*play fair!*' strategy for 2017-22 was established to examine and consider proposed changes to see if they will benefit the game. It has been well-received throughout the football world and there has been strong approval of its focus 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?

The IFAB, working with its expert panels, will continue to consult widely on a number of important Law-related topics, including player behaviour and potentially enhancing the role of the captain. 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 significant Law changes in recent years have begun to make a major contribution to increasing playing time, fairness and the attractiveness of the game. Along with the impact of VARs, player behaviour is also expected to continue to improve. All this will make the game even more enjoyable to play, watch and referee.

The IFAB greatly enjoys engaging with people throughout the world and we are always very pleased and interested to receive suggestions or questions relating to the Laws of the Game. Indeed, many of the recent Law changes have come from suggestions from people from many different parts of the world. We hope to engage more easily and extensively in the future so please check for details on our website: www.theifab.com Please continue to send your suggestions, ideas and questions to: lawenquiries@theifab.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 2019/20 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 (stating clearly on the front cover that it is that national FA's official translation) 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, except with the permission of The IFAB.

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 in yellow and editorial changes are underlined.

YC = yellow card (caution); RC = red card (sending-off).

LAWS OF THE GAME 2019/20





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) now have the option 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, except in youth football where the maximum will be determined by the national association, confederation or FIFA.

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

Permission for other modifications

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 without the permission of The IFAB.

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.

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 during 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 receives a second 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 but a player who has also received a non-temporary dismissal caution (YC) may not be replaced or substituted
- 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*

FFA has adopted System B and the only cautionable offence for which a player can be temporarily dismissed is dissent.

Any player who is cautioned for dissent will be punished by a temporary dismissal period of:

- Ten (10) minutes, for matches greater than 60 minutes in duration; and
- Five (5) minutes, for matches of 60 minutes or less in duration.

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 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.

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.



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. Where artificial surfaces are used, other lines are permitted provided they are a different colour and clearly distinguishable from the football lines. 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 (10 yds) 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.

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 (6 yds) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for 5.5 m (6 yds) 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.

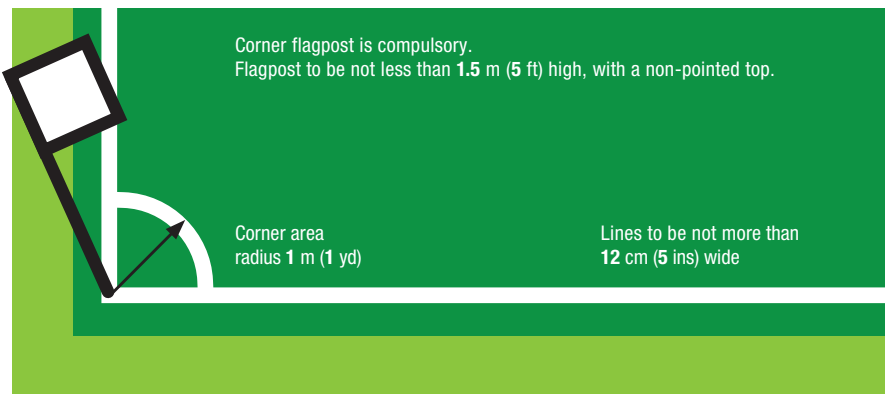
6. The penalty area

Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 16.5 m (18 yds) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for 16.5 m (18 yds) 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 (12 yds) from the midpoint between the goalposts. An arc of a circle with a radius of 9.15 m (10 yds) 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 (1 yd) 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, substitutes and substituted players as outlined below:

- the technical area should only extend 1m (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 (8 yds) and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is 2.44 m (8 ft).

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. Play is restarted with a dropped ball. If it can not be repaired the match must be abandoned. A rope or any flexible or dangerous material may not replace the crossbar.

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.

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).

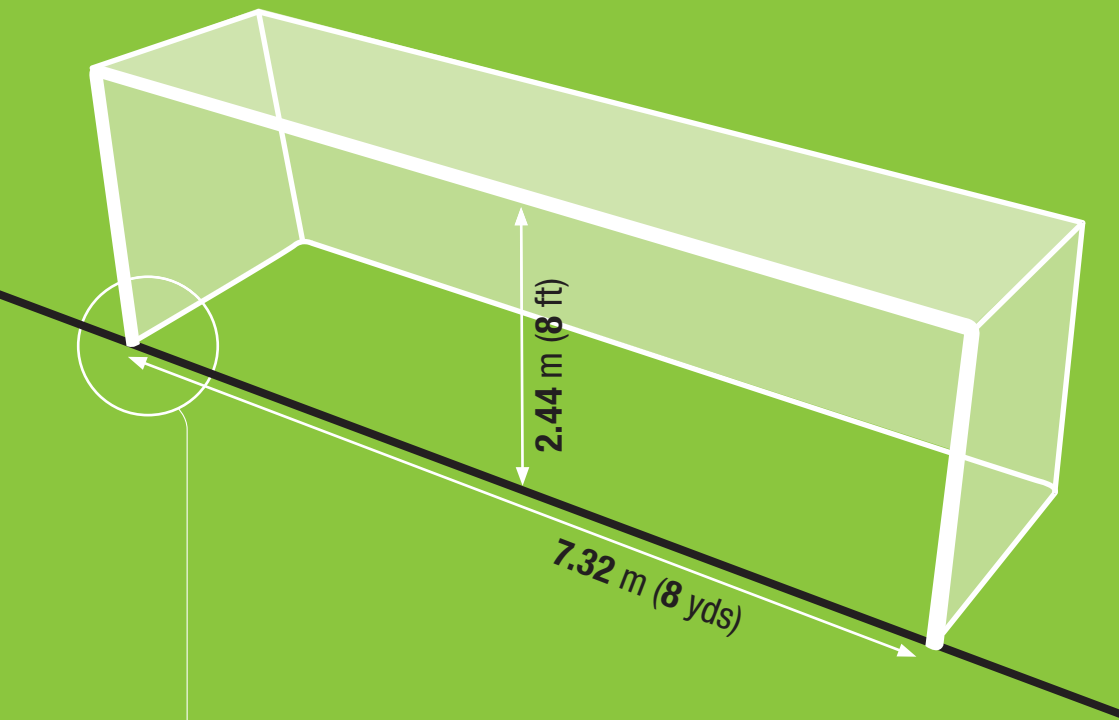
Requirements and specifications of GLT

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

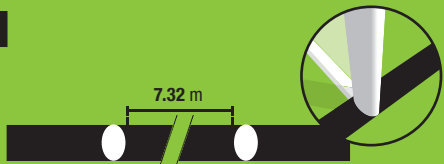
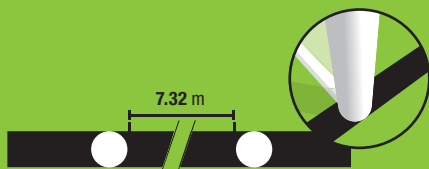
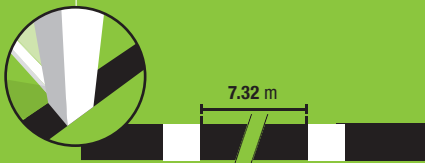
- FIFA Quality PRO
- FIFA Quality
- IMS – INTERNATIONAL MATCH STANDARD

An independent testing institute must verify the accuracy and functionality of the different technology providers' systems in accordance with the FIFA Quality Programme for GLT 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 authorities.

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.



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



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, the technical area or the referee review area (RRA), or on the ground within 1 m (1 yd) 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 (1 yd) from the touchlines
- the same distance from the goal line as the depth of the goal net
- 1 m (1 yd) 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.

14. Video assistant referees (VARs)

In matches using VARs there must be a video operation room (VOR) and at least one referee review area (RRA).

Video operation room (VOR)

The VOR is where the video assistant referee (VAR), assistant VAR (AVAR) and replay operator (RO) work; it may be in/close to the stadium or at a more distant location. Only authorised persons are permitted to enter the VOR or communicate with VAR, AVAR and RO during the match.

A player, substitute, substituted player or team official who enters the VOR will be sent off.

Referee review area (RRA)

In matches using VARs there must be at least one RRA where the referee undertakes an 'on-field review' (OFR). The RRA must be:

- in a visible location outside the field of play
- clearly marked

A player, substitute, substituted player or team official who enters the RRA will be cautioned.



LAW 02

THE BALL

1. Qualities and measurements

All balls must be:

- spherical
- made of suitable material
- of a circumference of between 68 cm (27 ins) and 70 cm (28 ins)
- between 410 g (14 oz) and 450 g (16 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

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 retaken.

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.

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 in the starting line-up 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's and women's 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.
- whether one additional substitute may be used when a match goes into extra time (whether or not the team has already used the full number of permitted substitutes)

Other matches

In national "A" team matches, a maximum of twelve substitutes may be named of which a maximum of six 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, and must leave by the nearest point on the boundary line unless the referee indicates that the player may leave directly and immediately at the halfway line or another point (e.g. for safety/security or injury)
 - > must go immediately to the technical area or dressing room and takes no further part in the match, except where return substitutions are permitted
- if a player who is to be substituted 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 the 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 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 but not if the change occurred during half-time (including half-time of 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 interference was by the attacking team.

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 authorities.

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:

- a single colour which is the same colour as the main colour of the shirt sleeve

or

- a pattern/colours which exactly replicate(s) 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 permitted where it directly relates to player welfare or safety or for tactical/coaching reasons but only small, mobile, hand-held equipment (e.g. microphone, headphone, ear-piece, mobile phone/smartphone, smartwatch, tablet, laptop) may be used. A team official who uses unauthorised equipment or who behaves in an inappropriate manner as a result of the use of electronic or communication equipment will be sent off.

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 competition organiser must ensure that the technology attached to the player's equipment is not dangerous and 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 these tests are subject to the approval of FIFA.

Where electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS) are used (subject to the agreement of the national football association/competition organiser) the competition organiser must ensure that the information and data transmitted from EPTS to the technical area during matches played in an official competition are reliable and accurate.

A professional standard was developed by FIFA and approved by The IFAB in order to support the competition organisers with the approval process of reliable and accurate electronic performance and tracking systems.

The following mark indicates that an EPTS device/system has been officially tested and meets the requirements in terms of reliability and accuracy of positional data in football:



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.

Principles

- Law 4 applies to all equipment (including clothing) worn by players, substitutes and substituted players; its principles also apply to all team officials in the technical area
- The following are (usually) permitted:
 - > the player's number, name, team crest/logo, initiative slogans/emblems promoting the game of football, respect and integrity as well as any advertising permitted by competition rules or national FA, confederation or FIFA regulations
 - > the facts of a match: teams, date, competition/event, venue
- Permitted slogans, statements or images should be confined to the shirt front and/or armband
- In some cases, the slogan, statement or image might only appear on the captain's armband

Interpreting the Law

When interpreting whether a slogan, statement or image is permissible, note should be taken of Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct), which requires the referee to take action against a player who is guilty of:

- using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
- gesturing in a provocative, derisory or inflammatory way

Any slogan, statement or image which falls into any of these categories is not permitted.

Whilst 'religious' and 'personal' are relatively easily defined, 'political' is less clear but slogans, statements or images related to the following are not permitted:

- any person(s), living or dead (unless part of the official competition name)
- any local, regional, national or international political party/organisation/group, etc.
- any local, regional or national government or any of its departments, offices or functions
- any organisation which is discriminatory
- any organisation whose aims/actions are likely to offend a notable number of people
- any specific political act/event

When commemorating a significant national or international event, the sensibilities of the opposing team (including its supporters) and the general public should be carefully considered.

Competition rules may contain further restrictions/limitations, particularly in relation to the size, number and position of permitted slogans, statements and images. It is recommended that disputes relating to slogans, statements or images be resolved prior to a match/competition taking place.

6. Offences and sanctions

For any offence of this Law 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, unless there was interference in which case a direct free kick (or penalty kick) is awarded from the position of the interference.

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 restart 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 abandoned the match. However, if at the end of the half, the referee leaves the field of play to go to the referee review area (RRA) or to instruct the players to return to the field of play, this does not prevent a decision being changed for an incident which occurred before the end of the half.

Except as outlined in Law 12.3 and the VAR protocol, a disciplinary sanction may only be issued after play has restarted if another match official had identified and attempted to communicate the offence to the referee before play restarted; the restart associated with the sanction does not apply.

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 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 technical area; if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction. A medical team official who commits a sending-off 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
 - > a penalty kick has been awarded and the injured player will be the kicker
- 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 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

4. Video assistant referee (VAR)

The use of video assistant referees (VARs) is only permitted where the match/competition organiser has fulfilled all the VAR protocol and implementation requirements (as set out in the VAR Handbook) and has received written permission from The IFAB and FIFA.

The referee may be assisted by a video assistant referee (VAR) only in the event of a 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' in relation to:

- goal/no goal
- penalty/no penalty
- direct red card (not second caution)
- mistaken identity when the referee cautions or sends off the wrong player of the offending team

The assistance from the video assistant referee (VAR) will relate to using replay(s) of the incident. The referee will make the final decision which may be based solely on the information from the VAR and/or the referee reviewing the replay footage directly ('on-field review').

Except for a 'serious missed incident', the referee (and where relevant other 'on-field', match officials) must always make a decision (including a decision not to penalise a potential offence); this decision does not change unless it is a 'clear and obvious error'.

Reviews after play has restarted

If play has stopped and restarted, the referee may only undertake a 'review', and take the appropriate disciplinary sanction, for mistaken identity or for a potential sending-off offence relating to violent conduct, spitting, biting or extremely offensive, insulting and/or abusive gesture(s).

5. Referee's equipment

Compulsory equipment

Referees must have the following equipment:

- Whistle(s)
- Watches (s)
- 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 'on-field' match officials are prohibited from wearing jewellery or any other electronic equipment, including cameras.

6. Referee signals

Refer to graphics for approved referee signals.



Indirect free kick



Direct free kick



Advantage (1)



Advantage (2)



Penalty kick



Red and Yellow card



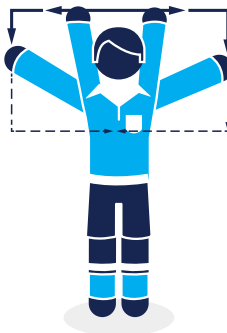
Corner kick



Goal kick



Check finger to ear, other hand/arm extended



Review TV signal

7. 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, reserve assistant referee, video assistant referee (VAR) and at least one assistant VAR (AVAR)) 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 referee, assistant referees, fourth official, additional assistant referees and reserve assistant referee are the 'on-field' match officials.

The VAR and AVAR are the 'video' match officials and assist the referee in accordance with the VAR protocol as determined by The IFAB.

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, the 'on-field' match officials 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 'on-field' 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 9.15m (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.

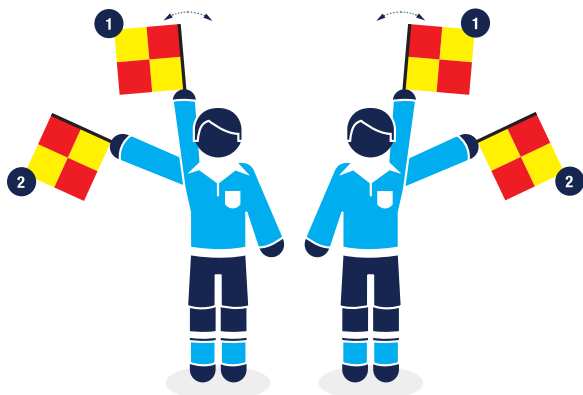
5. Video match officials

A video assistant referee (VAR) is a match official who may assist the referee to make a decision using replay footage only for a 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' relating to a goal/no goal, penalty/no penalty, direct red card (not a second caution) or a case of mistaken identity when the referee cautions or sends off the wrong player of the offending team.

An assistant video assistant referee (AVAR) is a match official who helps the VAR primarily by:

- watching the television footage while the VAR is busy with a 'check' or a 'review'
- keeping a record of VAR-related incidents and any communication or technology problems
- assisting the VAR's communication with the referee, especially communicating with the referee when the VAR is undertaking a 'check' / 'review' e.g. to tell the referee to 'stop play' or 'delay the restart' etc.
- recording the time 'lost' when play is delayed for a 'check' or a 'review'
- communicating information about a VAR-related decision to relevant parties

6. Assistant referee signals



Free kick for attacking team

Free kick for defending team



Goal kick



Throw-in for attacker



Throw-in for defender



Corner kick



Offside



**Offside on the near side
of the field**



Substitution



**Offside in the middle
of the field**



**Offside on the far side
of the field**

7. 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 (which should not exceed one minute) 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
- medical stoppages permitted by competition rules e.g. 'drinks' breaks (which should not exceed one minute) and 'cooling' breaks (ninety seconds to three minutes)
- delays relating to VAR 'checks' and 'reviews'
- 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 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 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

Offences 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 a handball offence, a direct free kick, is awarded.

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

2. Dropped ball

Procedure

- The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped:
 - > the ball was in the penalty area or
 - > the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area
- In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or, as outlined in Law 9.1, a match official
- 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.

Offences 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

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
- it touches a match official, 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.

2. Ball in play

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



LAW 10

DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF A MATCH

1. Goal scored

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.

2. Winning team

The team scoring the greater number of goals is the winner. If both teams score no goals or an equal number of goals the match is drawn.

When competition rules require a winning team after a drawn match or home-and-away tie, the only permitted procedures to determine the winning team are:

- away goals rule
- two extra periods of extra time not exceeding 15 minutes each
- kicks from the penalty mark

A combination of the above procedures may be used.

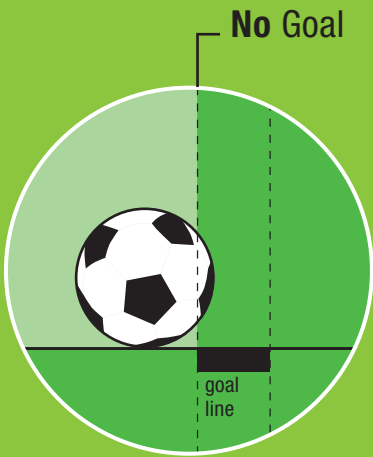
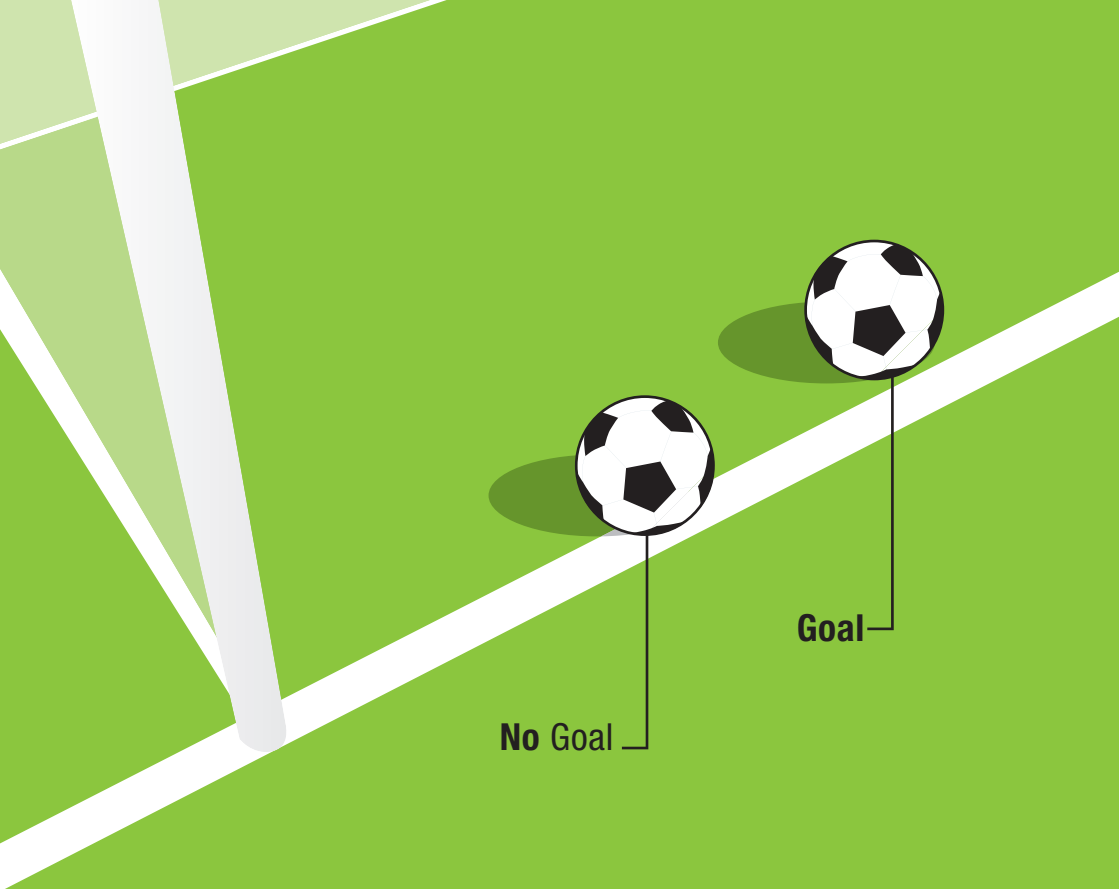
3. Kicks from the penalty mark

Kicks from the penalty mark are taken after the match has ended and unless otherwise stated, the relevant Laws of the Game apply.

Procedure

Before kicks from the penalty mark start

- Unless there are other considerations (e.g. ground conditions, safety etc.), 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 or playing surface becomes unusable
- 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



During kicks from the penalty mark

- Only eligible players and match officials 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 must be cautioned.
- 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 kicker commit an offence at the same time:
 - > if the kick is missed or saved, the kick is retaken and both players cautioned
 - > if the kick is scored, the goal is disallowed, the kick is recorded as missed and the kicker cautioned

Subject to the conditions explained below, both teams take five kicks

- The kicks are taken alternately by the teams
- 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 five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken
- If, after both teams have taken five 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
- Kicks from the penalty mark 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 kicks from the penalty mark

- A player, substitute or substituted player may be cautioned or sent off
- 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 seven players

LAW 11

OFFSIDE

1. Offside position

It is not an offence to be in an offside position.

A player is in an offside position if:

- any part of the head, body or feet is in the opponents' half (excluding the halfway line) and
- any part of the head, body or feet is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent

The hands and arms of all players, including the goalkeepers, are not considered.

A player is not in an offside position if level with the:

- second-last opponent or
- last two opponents

2. Offside offence

A player in an offside position at the moment the ball is played or touched* by a team-mate is only penalised on becoming involved in active play by:

- interfering with play by playing or touching a ball passed or touched by a team-mate or
- interfering with an opponent by:
 - > preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by clearly obstructing the opponent's line of vision or
 - > challenging an opponent for the ball or
 - > clearly attempting to play a ball which is close when this action impacts on an opponent or
 - > making an obvious action which clearly impacts on the ability of an opponent to play the ball

or

- gaining an advantage by playing the ball or interfering with an opponent when it has:
 - > rebounded or been deflected off the goalpost, crossbar, match official or an opponent
 - > been deliberately saved by any opponent

A player in an offside position receiving the ball from an opponent who deliberately plays the ball (except from a deliberate save by any opponent) is not considered to have gained an advantage.

A 'save' is when a player stops, or attempts to stop, a ball which is going into or very close to the goal with any part of the body except the hands/arms (unless the goalkeeper within the penalty area).

**The first point of contact of the 'play' or 'touch' of the ball should be used*

In situations where:

- a player moving from, or standing in, an offside position is in the way of an opponent and interferes with the movement of the opponent towards the ball this is an offside offence if it impacts on the ability of the opponent to play or challenge for the ball; if the player moves into the way of an opponent and impedes the opponent's progress (e.g. blocks the opponent) the offence should be penalised under Law 12
- a player in an offside position is moving towards the ball with the intention of playing the ball and is fouled before playing or attempting to play the ball, or challenging an opponent for the ball, the foul is penalised as it has occurred before the offside offence
- an offence is committed against a player in an offside position who is already playing or attempting to play the ball, or challenging an opponent for the ball, the offside offence is penalised as it has occurred before the foul challenge

3. No offence

There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:

- a goal kick
- a throw-in
- a corner kick

4. Offences and sanctions

If an offside offence occurs, the referee awards an indirect free kick where the offence occurred, including if it is in the player's own half of the field of play.

A defending player who leaves the field of play without the referee's permission shall be considered to be on the goal line or touchline for the purposes of offside until the next stoppage in play or until the defending team has played the ball towards the halfway line and it is outside its penalty area. If the player left the field of play deliberately, the player must be cautioned when the ball is next out of play.

An attacking player may step or stay off the field of play not to be involved in active play. If the player re-enters from the goal line and becomes involved in play before the next stoppage in play, or the defending team has played the ball towards the halfway line and it is outside its penalty area, the player shall be considered to be positioned on the goal line for the purposes of offside. A player who deliberately leaves the field of play and re-enters without the referee's permission and is not penalised for offside and gains an advantage must be cautioned.

If an attacking player remains stationary between the goalposts and inside the goal as the ball enters the goal, a goal must be awarded unless the player commits an offside offence or Law 12 offence in which case play is restarted with an indirect or direct free kick.





LAW 12

FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

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

1. 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:

- 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 or penalty 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 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
- throws an object at the ball, opponent or match official, or makes contact with the ball with a held object

See also offences in Law 3

Handling the ball

It is an offence if a player:

- deliberately touches the ball with their hand/arm, including moving the hand/arm towards the ball
- gains possession/control of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then:
 - > scores in the opponents' goal
 - > creates a goal-scoring opportunity
- scores in the opponents' goal directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper

It is usually an offence if a player:

- touches the ball with their hand/arm when:
 - > the hand/arm has made their body unnaturally bigger
 - > the hand/arm is above/beyond their shoulder level (unless the player deliberately plays the ball which then touches their hand/arm)

The above offences apply even if the ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close.

Except for the above offences, it is not usually an offence if the ball touches a player's hand/arm:

- directly from the player's own head or body (including the foot)
- directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close
- if the hand/arm is close to the body and does not make the body unnaturally bigger
- when a player falls and the hand/arm is between the body and the ground to support the body, but not extended laterally or vertically away from the body

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.

2. Indirect free kick

An indirect free kick is awarded if a player:

- plays in a dangerous manner
- impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made
- is guilty of dissent, using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures 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
- 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:

- controls the ball with the hand/arm for more than six seconds before releasing it
- 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
 - > receiving it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with the hand(s) when:

- the ball is between the hands or between the hand and any surface (e.g. ground, own body) or by touching it with any part of the hands or arms, except if the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper or the goalkeeper has made a save
- holding the ball in the outstretched open hand
- bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air

A goalkeeper cannot be challenged by an opponent when in control of the ball with the hand(s).

Playing in a dangerous manner

Playing in a dangerous manner is any action that, while trying to play the ball, threatens injury to someone (including the player themselves) and includes preventing a nearby opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury. A scissors or bicycle kick is permissible provided that it is not dangerous to an opponent.

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.

3. Disciplinary action

The referee 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 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.

Players, substitutes and substituted players

Delaying the restart of play 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.

Advantage

If the referee plays the advantage for an offence for 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, except for the denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity when the player is cautioned for unsporting behaviour.

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 committed 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 corner kick, free kick or throw-in
- persistent offences (no specific number or pattern of offences constitutes "persistent")

- unsporting behaviour
- entering the referee review area (RRA)
- excessively using the 'review' (TV screen) signal

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 the required permission and commits a reckless tackle or stops a promising attack with a foul/handball, etc.

Cautions for unsporting behaviour

There are different circumstances when a player must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour including if a player:

- attempts to deceive the referee e.g. by feigning injury or pretending to have been fouled (simulation)
- 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
- commits a foul 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
- denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by an offence which was an attempt to play 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
- uses a deliberate trick to pass the ball (including from a free 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
- verbally distracts an opponent during play or at a restart

Celebration of a goal

Players can celebrate when a goal is scored, but the celebration must not be excessive; choreographed celebrations are not encouraged and must not cause excessive time-wasting.

Leaving the field of play to celebrate a goal is not a cautionable offence but players should return as soon as possible.

A player must be cautioned, even if the goal is disallowed, for:

- climbing onto a perimeter fence and/or approaching the spectators in a manner which causes safety and/or security issues
- gesturing or acting in a provocative, derisive or inflammatory way
- covering the head or face with a mask or other 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 throw-in but suddenly leaving it to a team-mate to take
- delaying leaving the field of play when being substituted
- 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, substitute or substituted player who commits any of the following offences is sent off:

- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their 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 gestures
- receiving a second caution in the same match
- entering the video operation room (VOR)

A player, substitute or substituted player who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area.

Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity

Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence, the player is sent off wherever the offence occurs.

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; in all other circumstances (e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.) the offending player must be sent off.

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, from the side or from behind using one

or both legs, 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, match official, 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 and the offender cannot be identified, the senior team coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction.

Warning

The following offences should usually result in a warning; repeated or blatant offences should result in a caution or sending-off:

- entering the field of play in a respectful/non-confrontational manner
- failing to cooperate with a match official e.g. ignoring an instruction/request from an assistant referee or the fourth official
- minor/low-level disagreement (by word or action) with a decision
- occasionally leaving the confines of the technical area without committing another offence

Caution

Caution offences include (but are not limited to):

- clearly/persistently not respecting the confines of their team's technical area
- delaying the restart of play by their team
- deliberately entering the technical area of the opposing team (non-confrontational)
- dissent by word or action including:
 - > throwing/kicking drinks bottles or other objects
 - > gestures which show a clear lack of respect for the match official(s) e.g. sarcastic clapping

- entering the referee review area (RRA)
- excessively/persistently gesturing for a red or yellow card
- excessively showing the TV signal for a VAR 'review'
- gesturing or acting in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- persistent unacceptable behaviour (including repeated warning offences)
- showing a lack of respect for the game

Sending-off

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 technical area to:
 - > show dissent towards, or remonstrate with, a match official
 - > act in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- enter the opposing technical 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 match official (including at half-time and full-time)
 - > interfere with play, an opposing player or a match official
- entering the video operation room (VOR)
- physical or aggressive behaviour (including spitting or biting) towards an opposing player, substitute, team official, match official, 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 gestures
- using unauthorised electronic or communication equipment and/or behaving in an inappropriate manner as the result of using electronic or communication equipment
- violent conduct

Offences where an object (or the ball) is thrown

In all cases, the referee takes the appropriate disciplinary action:

- reckless – caution the offender for unsporting behaviour
- using excessive force – send off the offender for violent conduct

4. Restart of play after fouls and misconduct

If the ball is out of play, play is restarted according to the previous decision. If the ball is in play and a player commits a physical offence inside the field of play against:

- an opponent – indirect or direct free kick or penalty kick
- a team-mate, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, team official or a match official – a direct free kick or penalty kick
- any other person – a dropped ball

All verbal offences are penalised with an indirect free kick.

If, when the ball is in play:

- a player commits an offence against a match official 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 match official outside the field of play,

play is restarted with a free kick on the boundary line nearest to where the offence/interference occurred; a penalty kick is awarded if this is a direct free kick offence within the offender's 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, shinguard 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 match official 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 match official, 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, match official or the ball.

LAW 13

FREE KICKS

1. 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

2. 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 that area
- free kicks for offences involving a player entering, re-entering or leaving the field of play without permission are taken from the position of the ball when play was stopped. However, 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 this is within the offender's penalty area
- where the Law designates another position (see Laws 3, 11, 12)

The ball:

- must be stationary and the kicker must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player
- is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves

Until the ball is in play, all opponents must remain:

- at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the ball, unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts
- outside the penalty area for free kicks inside the opponents' penalty area

Where three or more defending team players form a 'wall', all attacking team players must remain at least 1 m (1 yd) 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 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.

3. 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 14

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 part of play as outlined in Laws 12 and 13.

A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

1. Procedure

The ball must be stationary on 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, without touching the goalposts, crossbar or goal net, until the ball has been kicked.

The players other than the kicker and goalkeeper must be:

- at least 9.15 m (10 yds) 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 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, or in line with, 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 or extra time. 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.

2. Offences and sanctions

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

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

- 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 or a team-mate offends:
 - > if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
 - > if the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken; the goalkeeper is cautioned if responsible for the offence
- a player of both teams offends the Laws of the Game, the kick is retaken unless a player commits a more serious offence (e.g. illegal feinting); if both the goalkeeper and kicker commit an offence at the same time:
 - > if the kick is missed or saved, the kick is retaken and both players cautioned
 - > if the kick is scored, the goal is disallowed, 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 handball 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 field of play from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalposts and is then touched by an outside agent:
 - > the referee stops play
 - > play is restarted with a dropped ball at the position where it touched the outside agent

3. Summary table

	Outcome of the penalty kick	
	Goal	No Goal
Encroachment by attacking player	Penalty is retaken	Indirect free kick
Encroachment by defending player	Goal	Penalty is retaken
Offence by goalkeeper	Goal	Penalty is retaken and caution for goalkeeper
Ball kicked backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
Illegal feinting	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker
Goalkeeper and kicker at the same time	Indirect free kick and caution for the kicker	Retake and caution for the kicker and the goalkeeper

LAW 15

THE

THROW-IN

A throw-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 throw-in:

- if the ball enters the opponents' goal – a goal kick is awarded
- if the ball enters the thrower's goal – a corner kick is awarded

1. Procedure

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:

- stand facing the field of play
- have part of each foot on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline
- throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head from the point where it left the field of play

All opponents must stand at least 2 m (2 yds) from the point on the touchline where the throw-in is to be taken.

The ball is in play when it enters the field of play. If the ball touches the ground before entering, the throw-in is retaken by the same team from the same position. If the throw-in is not taken correctly, it is retaken by the opposing team.

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

The thrower must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

2. Offences and sanctions

If, after the ball is in play, the thrower 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 thrower (including moving closer than 2m (2 yds) to the place where the throw-in is to be taken) is cautioned for unsporting behaviour and if the throw-in has been taken an indirect free kick is awarded.

For any other offence of this Law the throw-in is taken by a player of the opposing team.

LAW 16

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 opponents.

1. Procedure

- The ball must be stationary and is kicked from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves
- Opponents must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play

2. 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, 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 17

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 kicker's goal a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.

1. Procedure

- The ball must be placed in the corner area nearest to the point where the ball passed over the goal line
- 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
- The corner flagpost must not be moved
- Opponents must remain at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the corner arc until the ball is in play

2. 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.



VIDEO ASSISTANT REFEREE (VAR) PROTOCOL

Protocol – principles, practicalities and procedures

The VAR protocol, as far as possible, conforms to the principles and philosophy of the Laws of the Game.

The use of video assistant referees (VARs) is only permitted where the match/ competition organiser has fulfilled all the VAR protocol and implementation requirements (as set out in the VAR Handbook) and has received written permission from The IFAB and FIFA.

1. Principles

The use of VARs in football matches is based on a number of principles, all of which must apply in every match using VARs.

1. A video assistant referee (VAR) is a match official, with independent access to match footage, who may assist the referee only in the event of a **'clear and obvious error'** or **'serious missed incident'** in relation to:
 - a. **Goal/no goal**
 - b. **Penalty/no penalty**
 - c. **Direct red card** (not second yellow card/caution)
 - d. **Mistaken identity** (when the referee cautions or sends off the wrong player of the offending team)
2. The referee must always make a decision, i.e. the referee is not permitted to give 'no decision' and then use the VAR to make the decision; a decision to allow play to continue after an alleged offence can be reviewed.
3. The original decision given by the referee will not be changed unless the video review clearly shows that the decision was a 'clear and obvious error'.
4. Only the referee can initiate a 'review'; the VAR (and other match officials) can only recommend a 'review' to the referee.
5. The final decision is always taken by the referee, either based on information from the VAR or after the referee has undertaken an 'on-field review' (OFR).
6. There is no time limit for the review process as accuracy is more important than speed.
7. The players and team officials must not surround the referee or attempt to influence if a decision is reviewed, the review process or the final decision.
8. The referee must remain 'visible' during the review process to ensure transparency.
9. If play continues after an incident which is then reviewed, any disciplinary action taken/required during the post-incident period is not cancelled, even if the original decision is changed (except a caution/~~sending-off~~ for stopping a promising attack or DOGSO).
10. If play has stopped and been restarted, the referee may not undertake a 'review' except for a case of mistaken identity or for a potential sending-off offence relating to violent conduct, spitting, biting or extremely offensive, insulting and/or abusive gesture(s).
11. The period of play before and after an incident that can be reviewed is determined by the Laws of the Game and VAR protocol.
12. As the VAR will automatically 'check' every situation/decision, there is no need for coaches or players to request a 'review'.

2. Reviewable match-changing decisions/incidents

The referee may receive assistance from the VAR only in relation to four categories of match-changing decisions/incidents. In all these situations, the VAR is only used *after the referee has made a (first/original) decision* (including allowing play to continue), or if a serious incident is missed/not seen by the match officials.

The referee's original decision will not be changed unless there was a 'clear and obvious error' (this includes any decision made by the referee based on information from another match official e.g. offside).

The categories of decision/incident which may be reviewed in the event of a potential 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' are:

a. Goal/no goal

- attacking team offence in the build-up to or scoring of the goal (handball, foul, offside etc.)
- ball out of play prior to the goal
- goal/no goal decisions
- offence by goalkeeper and/or kicker at the taking of a penalty kick or encroachment by an attacker or defender who becomes directly involved in play if the penalty kick rebounds from the goalpost, crossbar or goalkeeper

b. Penalty kick/no penalty kick

- attacking team offence in the build-up to the penalty incident (handball, foul, offside etc.)
- ball out of play prior to the incident
- location of offence (inside or outside the penalty area)
- penalty kick incorrectly awarded
- penalty kick offence not penalised

c. Direct red cards (not second yellow card/caution)

- DOGSO (especially position of offence and positions of other players)
- serious foul play (or reckless challenge)
- violent conduct, biting or spitting at another person
- using offensive, insulting or abusive gestures

d. Mistaken identity (red or yellow card)"

If the referee penalises an offence and then gives the wrong player from the offending (penalised) team a yellow or red card, the identity of the offender can be reviewed; the actual offence itself cannot be reviewed unless it relates to a goal, penalty incident or direct red card.

3. Practicalities

Use of VARs during a match involves the following practical arrangements:

- The VAR watches the match in the video operation room (VOR) assisted by an assistant VAR (AVAR) and replay operator (RO)
- Depending on the number of camera angles (and other considerations) there may be more than one AVAR or RO
- Only authorised persons are allowed to enter the VOR or communicate with the VAR/AVAR/RO during the match
- The VAR has independent access to, and replay control of, TV broadcast footage
- The VAR is connected to the communication system being used by the match officials and can hear everything they say; the VAR can only speak to the referee by pushing a button (to avoid the referee being distracted by conversations in the VOR)
- If the VAR is busy with a 'check' or a 'review', the AVAR may speak to the referee especially if the game needs to be stopped or to ensure play does not restart
- If the referee decides to view the replay footage, the VAR will select the best angle/replay speed; the referee can request other/additional angles/speeds

4. Procedures

Original Decision

- The referee and other match officials must always make an initial decision (including any disciplinary action) as if there was no VAR (except for a 'missed' incident)
- The referee and other match officials are not permitted to give 'no decision' as this will lead to 'weak/indecisive' officiating, too many 'reviews' and significant problems if there is a technology failure
- The referee is the only person who can make the final decision; the VAR has the same status as the other match officials and can only assist the referee
- Delaying the flag/whistle for an offence is only permissible in a *very clear attacking situation* when a player is about to score a goal or has a clear run into/towards the opponents' penalty area
- If an assistant referee delays a flag for an offence, the assistant referee must raise the flag if the attacking team scores a goal, is awarded a penalty kick, free kick, corner kick or throw-in, or retains possession of the ball after the initial attack has ended; in all other situations, the assistant referee should decide whether or not to raise the flag, depending on the requirements of the game

Check

- The VAR automatically 'checks' the TV camera footage for every potential or actual goal, penalty or direct red card decision/incident, or a case of mistaken identity, using different camera angles and replay speeds
- The VAR can 'check' the footage in normal speed and/or in slow motion but, in general, slow motion replays should only be used for facts, e.g. position of offence/player, point of contact for physical offences and handball, ball out of play (including goal/no goal); normal speed should be used for the 'intensity' of an offence or to decide if it was a handball offence
- If the 'check' does not indicate a 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident', there is usually no need for the VAR to communicate with the referee – this is a 'silent check'; however, it sometimes helps the referee/ assistant referee to

manage the players/match if the VAR confirms that no 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' occurred

- If the restart of play needs to be delayed for a 'check', the referee will signal this by clearly holding a finger to the earpiece/headset and extending the other hand/arm; this signal must be maintained until the 'check' is complete as it announces that the referee is receiving information (which may be from the VAR or another match official)
- If the 'check' indicates a probable 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident', the VAR will communicate this information (but not the decision to be taken) to the referee who will then decide whether or not to initiate a 'review'

Review

- The referee can initiate a 'review' for a potential 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' when:
 - > the VAR (or another match official) recommends a 'review'
 - > the referee suspects that something serious has been 'missed'
- If play has already stopped, the referee delays the restart
- If play has not already stopped, the referee stops play when the ball is next in a neutral zone/situation (usually when neither team is in an attacking move)
- In both situations, the referee must indicate that a 'review' will take place by clearly showing the 'TV signal' (outline of a TV screen)
- The VAR describes to the referee what can be seen on the TV replay(s) but not the decision to be taken, and the referee then:
 - > makes a final decision based on the referee's own perception and the information from the VAR, and, where appropriate, input from other match officials – VAR-only review

or

- > goes to the referee review area to view replay footage – 'on-field review' (OFR) – before making a final decision. The other match officials will not review the footage unless, in exceptional circumstances, asked to do so by the referee.

- At the end of both review processes, the referee must show the 'TV signal' again, immediately followed by the final decision
- For factual decisions e.g. position of an offence or player (offside), point of contact (handball/foul), location (inside or outside the penalty area), ball out of play etc. a VAR-only review is usually appropriate but an 'on-field review' (OFR) can be used for a factual decision if it will help manage the players/match or 'sell' the decision (e.g. a crucial match-deciding decision late in the game)
- For subjective decisions, e.g. intensity of a foul challenge, interference at offside, handball considerations (position, intent etc.) an 'on-field review' (OFR) is often appropriate
- The referee can request different camera angles/replay speeds but, in general, slow motion replays should only be used for facts e.g. position of offence/player, point of contact for physical offences and handball, ball out of play (including goal/no goal); normal speed should be used for the 'intensity' of an offence or to decide if it was a handball offence
- For decisions/incidents relating to goals, penalty/no penalty and red cards for denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO), it may be necessary to review the attacking phase of play which led directly to the decision/incident; this may include how the attacking team gained possession of the ball in open play
- The Laws of the Game do not allow restart decisions (corner kicks, throw-ins etc.) to be changed once play has restarted, so they cannot be reviewed
- If play has stopped and restarted, the referee may only undertake a 'review', and take the appropriate disciplinary sanction, for a case of mistaken identity or for a potential sending-off offence relating to violent conduct, spitting, biting or extremely offensive, insulting and/or abusive gesture(s)
- The review process should be completed as efficiently as possible, but the accuracy of the final decision is more important than speed. For this reason, and because some situations are complex with several reviewable decisions/incidents, there is no maximum time limit for the review process

Final decision

- When the review process is completed, the referee must show the 'TV signal' and communicate the final decision
- The referee will then take/change/rescind any disciplinary action (where appropriate) and restart play in accordance with the Laws of the Game

Players, substitutes and team officials

- As the VAR will automatically 'check' every situation/incident, there is no need for coaches or players to request a '**check**' or '**review**'
- Players, substitutes and team officials must not attempt to influence or interfere with the review process, including when the final decision is communicated
- During the review process, players should remain on the field of play; substitutes and team officials should remain off the field of play
- A player/substitute/substituted player/team official who excessively shows the TV signal or enters the RRA will be cautioned
- A player/substitute/substituted player/team official who enters the VOR will be sent off

Match validity

In principle, a match is not invalidated because of:

- malfunction(s) of the VAR technology (as for goal line technology (GLT))
- wrong decision(s) involving the VAR (as the VAR is a match official)
- decision(s) not to review an incident
- review(s) of a non-reviewable situation/decision

LAW CHANGES

2019/20



Outline summary of Law changes

Herewith a simple outline of the main changes /clarifications.

Law 1

- A team official will be cautioned (YC) for entering the RRA and sent off (RC) for entering the VOR

Law 3

- A player who is being substituted must leave the field at the nearest point on the boundary line, unless otherwise directed by the referee

Law 4

- Undershirts can be multi-coloured/patterned if they are exactly the same as the shirt sleeve

Law 5

- Referee cannot change a restart decision after play has restarted but, in certain circumstances, may issue a YC/RC for a previous incident
- If the referee leaves the field for a VAR review or to call players back to the field at the end of a half, a decision can still be changed
- Team officials guilty of misconduct can be shown a YC/RC; if an offender cannot be identified, the senior coach in the technical area receives the YC/ RC
- If a penalty kick is awarded, the team's penalty taker can receive assessment or treatment and then stay on the field and take the kick

Law 7

- Clarification of the difference between 'cooling' and 'drinks' breaks

Law 8

- The team that wins the toss may choose to take the kick-off
- Dropped ball – ball dropped for goalkeeper (if play stopped in penalty area) or for one player of team that last touched the ball at the location of the last touch; all other players (of both teams) must be at least 4 m (4.5 yds) away

Law 9

- Dropped ball if the ball touches the referee (or other match official) and goes into the goal, possession changes or an attacking move starts

Law 10

- Goalkeeper cannot score by throwing the ball into the opponents' goal

Law 12

- Handball text re-written for greater clarity/consistency with clear guidelines for when 'non-deliberate' handball should (and should not) be penalised
- Confirmation that an 'illegal' handball offence by a goalkeeper in their own penalty area is not sanctioned with a YC/RC
- If, after a throw-in or deliberate kick from a team-mate, the goalkeeper unsuccessfully kicks or tries to kick the ball to release it into play, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball
- Referee can delay issuing a YC/RC until the next stoppage if the non-offending team takes a quick free kick and creates a goal-scoring opportunity
- The YC for an 'illegal' goal celebration remains even if the goal is disallowed
- List of the warning/YC/RC offences for team officials
- All verbal offences are punished with an IDFK
- Kicking an object is punished in the same way as throwing an object

Editorial Changes

Law 13

- Once an IDFK has been taken, the referee can stop showing the IDFK signal if it is clear that a goal cannot be scored directly (e.g. from most offside IDFKs)
- For defending team free kicks in their penalty area, the ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves; it does not have to leave the penalty area
- When there is a defensive 'wall' of at least 3 players, all attacking team players must be at least 1 m from the 'wall'; IDFK if they encroach

Law 14

- Goalposts, crossbar and nets must not be moving when a penalty is taken and the goalkeeper must not be touching them
- Goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on, or in line with, the goal line when a penalty kick is taken; cannot stand behind the line
- If an offence occurs after the referee signals for a penalty kick to be taken but the kick is not taken, it must then be taken after any YC/RC is issued

Law 15

- Opponents must be at least 2 m from the point on the touchline where a throw-in is to be taken, even if the thrower is back from the line

Law 16

- At goal kicks, the ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves; it does not have to leave the penalty area

A series of editorial changes have been made to make the vocabulary/order of text more consistent/logical. Some text has been deleted as no longer relevant. The main changes have been underlined. The following are the most notable changes:

Amended text (in several Laws)

- Reference to 'deliberate' handball (or intent) has been changed to 'handball offence'
- 'sent-off' is hyphenated and 'send off' (noun) becomes 'sending-off'

Deleted text

Law 4

- Reference to transition period for the EPTS professional standard which has ended

Law 5

- Reference to reasons for introducing the 'one armed' advantage signal

Law 16

- Reference to goal kick being retaken if touched before leaving the penalty area

Reorganised text

Some sentences/paragraphs have been moved to make the text/order more logical:

- page 13 – paragraph about lines on artificial surfaces moved
- page 16 – text re-arranged
- page 21 – order of ball circumference and weight measurements reversed
- page 49 – bullet point moved
- page 67 – text re-arranged

Restored text

Law 1

- Last sentence of paragraph about 'logos and emblems' restored to English version

Details of all Law Changes (in Law order)

The following lists all changes to the Laws of the Game since edition 2018/19. For each change the old wording (where appropriate) and the new/changed/ additional wording are given followed by an explanation for the change.

Law 01 – The Field of Play

14. Video assistant referees (VARs)

Amended text

Video operation room (VOR)

A player, substitute, or substituted player or team official who enters the VOR will be sent off.
~~a team official who enters the VOR will be dismissed from the technical area.~~

Referee review area (RRA)

A player, substitute, or substituted player or team official who enters the RRA will be cautioned.
~~a team official who enters the RRA will be publicly given an official warning (or cautioned where YCs are used for team officials).~~

Explanation

Misconduct by team officials is now a sanction using YC/RC.

Law 03 – The Players

3. Substitution procedure

Amended text

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

- (...)
- the player being substituted:
 - > receives the referee's permission to leave the field of play, unless already off the field, and must leave by the nearest point on the boundary line unless the referee indicates that the player may leave directly and immediately at the halfway line or another point (e.g. for safety/security or injury)
 - > the player being replaced is not obliged to leave at the halfway line and must go immediately to the technical area or dressing room and takes no further part in the match, except where return substitutions are permitted
- if a player who is to be replaced substituted refuses to leave, play continues

Explanation

To stop a player who is being substituted 'wasting' time by leaving slowly at the halfway line (which is not a Law requirement) the player must leave at the nearest point (as with an injury) unless the referee indicates otherwise, e.g. if the player can leave quickly at the halfway line, there is a safety/security issue or the player leaves on a stretcher. The player must go immediately to the technical area or dressing room to avoid problems with substitutes, spectators, or the match officials. A player who infringes the spirit of this Law should be sanctioned for unsporting behaviour i.e. delaying the restart of play.

Law 04 – The Players’ Equipment

3. Colours

Additional text

Undershirts must be:

- a single colour which is the same as the main colour of the shirt sleeve or
- a pattern/colours which exactly replicate(s) the shirt sleeve

Explanation

Manufacturers now make patterned undershirts whose sleeves are the same as the main shirt sleeve; these should be allowed as they help match officials’ decision-making.

Law 05 – The Referee

2. Decisions of the referee

Amended text

The referee may not change a restart decision on realising 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 abandoned the match. However, if at the end of the half, the referee leaves the field of play to go to the referee review area (RRA) or to instruct the players to return to the field of play, this does not prevent a decision being changed for an incident which occurred before the end of the half.

Except as outlined in Law 12.3 and the VAR protocol, a disciplinary sanction may only be issued after play has restarted if another match official had identified and attempted to communicate the offence to the referee before play restarted; the restart associated with the sanction does not apply.

Explanation

- The word ‘terminated’ is not easily translated – ‘abandoned’ is better
- If, at the end of a half, the referee goes to the RRA or to tell the players to return to the field, a ‘review’ is allowed and a decision can be changed for an offence which occurred before the half ended
- Sometimes a match official indicates/communicates a YC/RC offence (e.g. AR flagging for violent conduct off the ball) but the referee does not see the indication/hear the communication until after play has restarted. The referee can take the appropriate disciplinary action, but the restart associated with the offence does not apply

3. Powers and duties – Disciplinary action

Amended text

(...)

- takes action against team officials who fail to act in a responsible manner and may expel them 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 technical area; if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction. A medical team official who commits a dismissible sending-off offence may remain if (...)

Explanation

The experiment with YC/RC for misconduct by team officials has been successful and has revealed many benefits at all levels, including for young referees dealing with ‘difficult’ adult coaches. If the offender cannot be identified, the senior team official (usually the main coach) in the technical area will receive the YC/RC (as the person responsible for the other team officials).

3. Powers and duties – Injuries

Additional text

(...)

- An injured player may not be treated on the field of play (...). Exceptions to the requirement to leave the field of play are only when:
- (...)
- a penalty kick has been awarded and the injured player will be the kicker

Explanation

It is unfair if the team's kicker needs assessment/treatment and then has to leave the field and cannot take the penalty kick.

Law 07 – The Duration of the Match

3. Allowance for time lost

Amended text

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

(...)

- stoppages for drinks (which should not exceed one minute) or other medical reasons permitted by competition rules
- medical stoppages permitted by competition rules e.g. 'drinks' breaks (which should not exceed one minute) and 'cooling' breaks (ninety seconds to three minutes)

Explanation

In the interests of player safety, competition rules may allow, in certain weather conditions (e.g. high humidity and temperatures), 'cooling' breaks (from ninety seconds to three minutes) to allow the body's temperature to fall; they are different from 'drinks' breaks (maximum one minute) which are for rehydration.

Law 08 – The Start and Restart of Play

1. Kick-off – Procedure

Amended text

- the team that wins the toss of a coin decides which goal it will 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 wins the toss decided which goal to attack in the first half takes the kick-off to start the second half

Explanation

Recent Law changes have made the kick-off more dynamic (e.g. a goal can be scored directly from the kick-off) so captains winning the toss often ask to take the kick-off.

2. Dropped ball – Procedure

Amended text

Old text

- 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

New text

- The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped:
 - > the ball was in the penalty area or
 - > the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area
- In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or, as outlined in Law 9.1, a match official
- 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.

~~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:~~

Explanation

The current dropped ball procedure often leads to a ‘manufactured’ restart which is ‘exploited’ unfairly (e.g. kicking the ball out for a throw-in deep in the opponents’ half) or an aggressive confrontation. Returning the ball to the team that last played it (had possession) restores what was ‘lost’ when play was stopped, except in the penalty area where it is simpler to return the ball to the goalkeeper. To prevent that team gaining an unfair advantage, all players of both teams, except the player receiving the ball, must be at least 4 m (4.5 yds) away.

Law 09 – The Ball In and Out of Play

1. Ball out of play

Additional text

The ball is out of play when:

- (...)
- it touches a match official, 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.

Explanation

It can be very unfair if a team gains an advantage or scores a goal because the ball has hit a match official, especially the referee.

2. Ball in play

Amended text

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

Explanation

Except as outlined in Law 9.1, the ball is in play when it touches a match official.

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

1. Goal scored

Additional text

(...)

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

Explanation

Change to be consistent with re-wording of handball in Law 12.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

1. Direct free kick – Handling the ball

Amended text

The main part of the 'Handling the ball' section on handball has been re-written (see page 57)

Explanation

Greater clarity is needed for handball, especially on those occasions when 'non-deliberate' handball is an offence. The re-wording follows a number of principles:

- football does not accept a goal being scored by a hand/arm (even if accidental)
- football expects a player to be penalised for handball if they gain possession/ control of the ball from their hand/arm and gain a major advantage e.g. score or create a goal-scoring opportunity
- it is natural for a player to put their arm between their body and the ground for support when falling
- having the hand/arm above shoulder height is rarely a 'natural' position and a player is 'taking a risk' by having the hand/arm in that position, including when sliding
- if the ball comes off the player's body, or off another player (of either team) who is close by, onto the hand/arm it is often impossible to avoid contact with the ball

1. Direct free kick – Handling the ball

Amended text

The goalkeeper has the same restrictions on handling the ball as any other player outside the penalty area. Inside their penalty area, the goalkeeper cannot be guilty of a handling offence incurring a direct free kick; or any related sanction but can be guilty of handling offences that incur an indirect free kick. 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.

Explanation

Goalkeepers cannot handle the ball in their penalty area from a deliberate kick or throw-in from a team-mate, or having released the ball from their hands. If they do, it is an IDFK but this and any other 'illegal' handling does not incur any disciplinary sanction even if it stops a promising attack or denies a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity.

2. Indirect free kick

Amended text

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

- controls the ball with the hands/arm for more than six seconds before releasing it
- touches the ball with the hands/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
 - > receiving it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

Explanation

- Inclusion of 'arm' is consistent with other parts of the Law relating to handling the ball
- When the GK clearly kicks or tries to kick the ball into play, this shows no intention to handle the ball so, if the 'clearance' attempt is unsuccessful, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball without committing an offence

3. Disciplinary action

Amended text

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, against an opponent, a team-mate, a match official or any other person or the Laws of the Game, is disciplined according to the offence.

(...)

Only a player, substitute, or substituted player or team official may be shown the red or yellow card.

Explanation

Red and yellow cards may now be shown to team officials (see Law 5).

3. Disciplinary action – Delaying the restart to show a card

Additional text

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.

Explanation

Occasionally, an attack is stopped by a cautionable or sending-off offence and the attacking team takes a quick free kick which restores the 'lost' attack; it is clearly 'unfair' if this 'new' attack is stopped to issue the YC/RC. However, if the referee has distracted the offending team by starting the YC/RC procedure, the quick free kick is not allowed. For a DOGSO offence, the player will be cautioned and not sent off because the attack was restarted (as when advantage is applied for a DOGSO offence).

3. Disciplinary action – Celebration of a goal

Additional text

A player must be cautioned, even if the goal is disallowed, for: (...)

Explanation

Cautions for inappropriate goal celebrations apply even if the goal is disallowed as the impact (safety, image of the game etc.) is the same as if the goal was awarded.

3. Disciplinary action – Team officials

Additional text

A new section – ‘**Team officials**’ – has been added outlining the usual offences for which a team official may be warned, cautioned or sent-off (see page 61).

Explanation

The correct use of the YC/RC for misconduct by team officials will be assisted by including the main warning/YC/RC offences in the Laws.

4. Restart of play after fouls and misconduct

Amended text

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

- an opponent – indirect or direct free kick or penalty kick
- a team-mate, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, team official, match official – a direct free kick or penalty kick
- any other person – a dropped ball

All verbal offences are penalised with an indirect free kick.

Explanation

Confirmation of the different restarts for physical offences and that all verbal offences, even if directed at a match official, are penalised with an indirect free kick.

4. Restart of play after fouls and misconduct

Additional text

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.

Explanation

Clarification that the offence must be committed by a player against a team-mate or one of his/her team officials, substitutes etc. for an IDFK to be awarded.

4. Restart of play after fouls and misconduct

Amended text

If a player standing 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 player, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, or team official, or a match official or the match ball, play is restarted with a direct free kick (...)

Explanation

Kicking an object at someone or the ball is punished the same as throwing an object.

Law 13 – Free kicks

1. Types of free kick – Indirect free kick signal

Additional text

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, or goes out of play or it is clear that a goal cannot be scored directly.

Explanation

Many indirect free kicks are too far from the opponents' goal for a goal to be scored directly (e.g. IDFKs for offside); in these cases, the referee only needs to maintain the signal until the kick is taken because running when showing the signal is not easy.

2. Procedure

Amended text

- free kicks for offences involving a player entering, re-entering or leaving the field of play without permission are taken from the position of the ball when play was stopped. However, if a player leaves the field of play as part of play and commits an offence off the field of play against another player, play is restarted with a free kick taken on the boundary line nearest to where the offence occurred; (...)

Explanation

Text amended to be consistent with other parts of the Laws.

2. Procedure

Amended text

The ball:

- (...)
- is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves except for a free kick to the defending team in their penalty area where the ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area

Explanation

The experiment where, at a defending team free kick in the penalty area, the ball is in play once it is kicked, and does not have to leave the penalty area, has produced a faster and more constructive restart. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area and at least 9.15 m away until the ball is in play. The same change has been made to the goal kick (see Law 16).

2. Procedure

Amended text

Until the ball is in play, all opponents must remain:

- at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the ball, unless (...)
- outside the penalty area for free kicks inside the opponents' penalty area

Where three or more defending team players form a 'wall', all attacking team players must remain at least 1 m (1 yd) from the 'wall' until the ball is in play.

Explanation

Attackers standing very close to, or in, the defensive 'wall' at a free kick often cause management problems and waste time. There is no legitimate tactical justification for attackers to be in the 'wall' and their presence is against the 'spirit of the game' and often damages the image of the game.

3. Offences and sanctions

Additional text

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.

Explanation

Confirmation of the restart if an attacking player encroaches within 1 m of the 'wall'.

3. Offences and sanctions

Amended text

If, when a free kick is taken by the defending team from inside its penalty area, any opponents are inside the penalty area (...), touches or challenges for the ball before it has touched another player is in play, the free kick is retaken.

If, when a free kick is taken by the defending team inside its penalty area, the ball is not kicked directly out of the penalty area the kick is retaken

Explanation

Confirmation of the restart for the above situation.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

1. Procedure

Additional text

The ball must be stationary on the penalty mark and the goalposts, crossbar and goal net must not be moving.

(...)

The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, without touching the goalposts, crossbar or goal net, until the ball has been kicked.

(...)

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, or in line with, the goal line.

Explanation

The referee must not signal for the penalty kick to be taken if the goalkeeper is touching the goalposts, crossbar or net, or if they are moving e.g. the goalkeeper has kicked/shaken them.

Goalkeepers are not permitted to stand in front of or behind the line. Allowing the goalkeeper to have only one foot touching the goal line (or, if jumping, in line with the goal line) when the penalty kick is taken is a more practical approach as it is easier to identify than if both feet are not on the line. As the kicker can 'stutter' in the run, it is reasonable that the goalkeeper can take one step in anticipation of the kick.

2. Offences and sanctions

Additional text

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

If, before (...).

Explanation

If an offence occurs after the referee has signalled for a penalty kick to be taken but the kick is not taken, a free kick cannot be awarded as the ball has not been put into play; the necessary disciplinary action can be taken.

Law 15 – The Throw-in

1. Procedure

Amended text

All opponents must stand at least 2 m (2 yds) from the point at which on the touchline where the throw-in is to be taken.

Explanation

This covers situations where a player takes a throw-in some distance from the touchline.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick

Amended text

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 opponents if the ball left the penalty area.

Explanation

The ball is now in play once it has been kicked and clearly moves.

1. Procedure

Amended text

The ball is in play when it leaves the penalty area is kicked and clearly moves

Explanation

The experiment that at a goal kick the ball is in play once it is kicked, and does not have to leave the penalty area, has created a faster and more dynamic/constructive restart to the game. It has reduced the time 'lost/wasted' including stopping the tactic of 'wasting' time when a defender deliberately plays the ball before it leaves the penalty area knowing that all that will happen is the goal kick will be retaken. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.

2. Offences and sanctions

Amended text

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 (...), touches or challenges for the ball before it has touched another player is in play, the goal kick is retaken.

Explanation

Confirmation of the action the referee should take when an opponent is inside the penalty area when a goal kick is taken.

VAR Protocol

2. Reviewable match-changing decisions/incidents

Amended text

The categories of decision/incident which may be reviewed in the event of a potential 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' are:

a. Goal/no goal

An offence by the team that scored the goal in the attacking phase that ended with the scoring of a goal, including:

- attacking team offence in the build-up to or scoring of the goal (handball, foul, offside etc.)
- offside: position and offence
- ball out of play prior to the goal
- goal/no goal decisions
- offence by goalkeeper and/or kicker at the taking of a penalty kick or encroachment by an attacker or defender who becomes directly involved in play if the penalty kick rebounds from the goalpost, crossbar or goalkeeper

b. Penalty kick/no penalty kick

- attacking team offence in the build-up to the penalty incident (handball, foul, offside etc.)
- ball out of play prior to the incident
- location of offence (inside or outside the penalty area)
- penalty kick incorrectly awarded
- penalty kick offence not penalised
- offence by goalkeeper and/or kicker at the taking of a penalty kick
- encroachment by an attacker or defender who becomes directly involved in play if the penalty kick rebounds from the goalpost, crossbar or goalkeeper

Explanation

Text simplified and bullet points moved as offences at the taking of a penalty kick are 'goal/no goal' incidents.

4. Procedures – Original decision

Additional text

If an assistant referee delays a flag for an offence, the assistant referee must raise the flag if the attacking team scores a goal, is awarded a penalty kick, free kick, corner kick or throw-in, or retains possession of the ball after the initial attack has ended; in all other situations, the assistant referee should decide whether or not to raise the flag, depending on the requirements of the game

Explanation

Clarification of when the assistant referee must raise a 'delayed' flag for a very close decision.

4. Procedures – Players, substitutes and team officials

Amended text

- A player/substitute/substituted player/team official who excessively shows the TV signal or enters the RRA will be cautioned
- A team official who excessively shows the TV signal or enters the RRA will be publically-officially warned (or cautioned where yellow and red cards for team officials are in use)
- A player/substitute/substituted player/team official who enters the VOR will be sent off; a team official who enters the VOR will be dismissed from the technical area

Explanation

Reference to RC/YC for team officials required following change to Law 5 and 12.

GLOSSARY



The Glossary contains words/phrases which need clarification or explanation beyond the detail in the Laws and/or which are not always easily translated into other languages.

Football bodies

The IFAB – The International Football Association Board

Body composed of the four British FAs and FIFA which is responsible for the Laws of the Game worldwide. In principle, changes to the Laws may only be approved at the Annual General Meeting usually held in February or March

FIFA – Fédération Internationale de Football Association

The governing body responsible for football throughout the world

Confederation

Body responsible for football in a continent. The six confederations are AFC (Asia), CAF (Africa), CONCACAF (North, Central America and Caribbean), CONMEBOL (South America), OFC (Oceania) and UEFA (Europe)

National football association

Body responsible for football in a country

Football terms

A

Abandon

To end/terminate a match before the scheduled finish

Additional time

Time allowed at the end of each half for time 'lost' because of substitutions, injuries, disciplinary action, goal celebration etc.

Advantage

The referee allows play to continue when an offence has occurred if this benefits the non-offending team

Assessment of injured player

Quick examination of an injury, usually by a medical person, to see if the player requires treatment

Away goals rule

Method of deciding a match/tie when both teams have scored the same number of goals; goals scored away from home count double

B

Brutality

An act which is savage, ruthless or deliberately violent

C

Caution

Disciplinary sanction which results in a report to a disciplinary authority; indicated by showing a yellow card; two cautions in a match result a player or team official being sent off

Challenge

An action when a player competes/contests with an opponent for the ball

Charge (an opponent)

Physical challenge against an opponent, usually using the shoulder and upper arm (which is kept close to the body)

'Cooling' break

In the interests of player welfare and safety, competition rules may allow, in certain weather conditions (high humidity and temperatures), 'cooling' breaks (usually ninety seconds to three minutes) to allow the body's temperature, to fall; these are different from 'drinks' breaks

D

Deceive

Act to mislead/trick the referee into giving an incorrect decision/disciplinary sanction which benefits the deceiver and/or their team

Deliberate

An action which the player intended/meant to make; it is not a 'reflex' or unintended reaction

Direct free kick

A free kick from which a goal can be scored by kicking the ball directly into the opponents' goal without having to touch another player

Discretion

Judgment used by a referee or other match official when making a decision

Dissent

Public protest or disagreement (verbal and/or physical) with a match official's decision; punishable by a caution (yellow card)

Distract

Disturb, confuse or draw attention (usually unfairly)

'Drinks' break

Competition rules may allow 'drinks' breaks (of no more than one minute) for players to rehydrate; these are different from 'cooling' breaks

Dropped ball

A method of restarting play – the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball (except in the penalty area where the ball is dropped for the goalkeeper); the ball is in play when it touches the ground

E

Electronic performance and tracking system (EPTS)

System which records and analyses data about the physical and physiological performance of a player

Endanger the safety of an opponent

Put an opponent at danger or risk (of injury)

Excessive force

Using more force/energy than is necessary

Extra time

A method of trying to decide the outcome of a match involving two equal additional periods of play not exceeding 15 minutes each

F

Feinting

An action which attempts to confuse an opponent. The Laws define permitted and 'illegal' feinting

Field of play (Pitch)

The playing area confined by the touchlines and goal lines and goal nets where used

G

Goal line technology (GLT)

Electronic system which immediately informs the referee when a goal has been scored i.e. the ball has wholly passed over the goal line in the goal (*See Law 1 for details*)

H

Hybrid system

A combination of artificial and natural materials to create a playing surface which requires sunlight, water, air circulation and mowing

I

Impede

To delay, block or prevent an opponent's action or movement

Indirect free kick

A free kick from which a goal can only be scored if another player (of any team) touches the ball after it has been kicked

Intercept

To prevent a ball reaching its intended destination

K

Kick

The ball is kicked when a player makes contact with the foot and/or the ankle

Kicks from the penalty mark

Method of deciding the result of a match by each team alternately taking kicks until one team has scored one more goal and both teams have taken the same number of kicks (unless during the first 5 kicks for each team, one team could not equal the other team's score even if they scored from all their remaining kicks)

N

Negligible

Insignificant, minimal

O

Offence

An action which breaks/violates the Laws of the Game

Offensive, insulting or abusive language

Verbal or physical behaviour which is rude, hurtful, disrespectful; punishable by a sending-off (red card)

Outside agent

Any person who is not a match official or on the team list (players, substitutes and team officials) or any animal, object, structure etc.

P

Penalise

To punish, usually by stopping play and awarding a free kick or penalty kick to the opposing team (*see also Advantage*)

Play

Action by a player which makes contact with the ball

Playing distance

Distance to the ball which allows a player to touch the ball by extending the foot/ leg or jumping or, for goalkeepers, jumping with arms extended. Distance depends on the physical size of the player

Q

Quick free kick

A free kick taken (with the referee's permission) very quickly after play was stopped

R

Reckless

Any action (usually a tackle or challenge) by a player which disregards (ignores) the danger to, or consequences for, the opponent

Restart

Any method of resuming play after it has been stopped

S

Sanction

Disciplinary action taken by the referee

Save

An action by a player to stop or attempt to stop the ball when it is going into or very close to the goal using any part of the body except the hands/arms (unless a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)

Sending-off

Disciplinary action when a player is required to leave the field for the remainder of the match having committed a sending-off offence (indicated by a red card); if the match has started the player cannot be replaced. A team official may also be sent off.

Serious foul play

A tackle or challenge for the ball that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality; punishable by a sending-off (red card)

Signal

Physical indication from the referee or any match official; usually involves movement of the hand or arm or flag, or use of the whistle (referee only)

Simulation

An action which creates a wrong/false impression that something has occurred when it has not (*see also deceive*); committed by a player to gain an unfair advantage

Spirit of the game

The main/essential principles/ethos of football as a sport but also within a particular match (*see Law 5*)

Suspend

To stop a match for a period of time with the intention of eventually restarting play e.g. fog, heavy rain, thunderstorm, serious injury

T

Tackle

A challenge for the ball with the foot (on the ground or in the air)

Team list

Official team document usually listing the players, substitutes and team officials

Team official

Any non-player listed on the official team list e.g. coach, physiotherapist, doctor (see *technical staff*)

Technical area

Defined area (in stadia) for the team officials which includes seating (See *Law 1 for details*)

Technical staff

Official non-playing team members listed on the official team list e.g. coach, physiotherapist, doctor (see *team official*)

Temporary dismissal

A temporary suspension from the next part of the match for a player guilty of some/all cautionable offences (depending on competition rules)

U

Undue interference

Action/influence which is unnecessary

Unsporting behaviour

Unfair action/behaviour; punishable by a caution

V

Violent conduct

An action, which is not a challenge for the ball, which uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent or when a player deliberately strikes someone on the head or face unless the force used is negligible

Referee terms

Match official(s)

General term for person or persons responsible for controlling a football match on behalf of a football association and/or competition under whose jurisdiction the match is played

Referee

The main match official for a match who operates on the field of play. Other match officials operate under the referee's control and direction. The referee is the final/ultimate decision-maker

Other match officials

'On-field' match officials

Competitions may appoint other match officials to assist the referee:

- **Assistant referee**

A match official with a flag positioned on one half of each touchline to assist the referee particularly with offside situations and goal kick/corner kick/throw-in decisions

- **Fourth official**

A match official with responsibility for assisting the referee with both on-field and off-field matters, including overseeing the technical area, controlling substitutes etc.

- **Additional assistant referee (AAR)**

A match official positioned on the goal line to assist the referee particularly with situations in/around the penalty area and goal/no-goal decisions

- **Reserve assistant referee**

Assistant referee who will replace an assistant (and, if competition rules permit, a fourth official and/or AAR) who is unable to continue

'Video' match officials

These are the VAR and AVAR who assist the referee in accordance with the VAR protocol

- **Assistant video assistant referee (AVAR)**

A current or former referee/assistant referee appointed to assist the video assistant referee (VAR)

- **Video assistant referee (VAR)**

A current or former referee appointed to assist the referee by communicating information from replay footage only in relation to a 'clear and obvious error' or 'serious missed incident' in one of the reviewable categories

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR MATCH OFFICIALS

Introduction

These guidelines contain practical advice for match officials which supplements the information in the Laws of the Game section.

Reference is made in Law 5 to referees operating within the framework of the Laws of the Game and the 'spirit of the game'. Referees are expected to use common sense and to apply the 'spirit of the game' when applying the Laws of the Game, especially when making decisions relating to whether a match takes place and/or continues.

This is especially true for the lower levels of football where it may not always be possible for the Law to be strictly applied. For example, unless there are safety issues, the referee should allow a game to start/continue if:

- one or more corner flags is missing
- there is a minor inaccuracy with the markings on the field of play such as the corner area, centre circle etc.
- the goal posts/crossbar are not white

In such cases, the referee should, with the agreement of the teams, play/continue the match and must submit a report to the appropriate authorities.

Key:

- AR = assistant referee
- AAR = additional assistant referee

Positioning, movement and teamwork

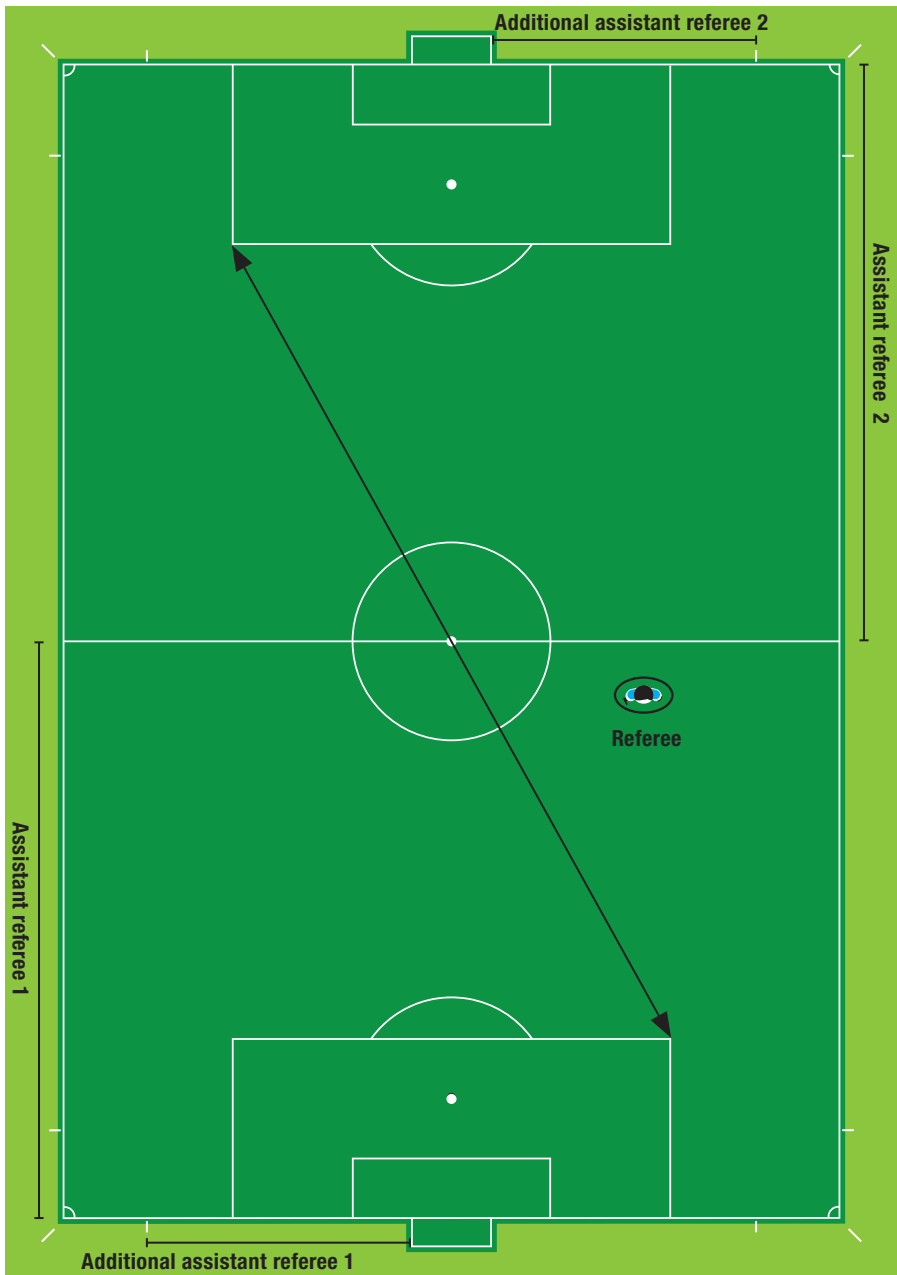
1. General positioning and movement

The best position is one from which the referee can make the correct decision. All recommendations about positioning must be adjusted using specific information about the teams, the players and events in the match.

The positions recommended in the graphics are basic guidelines. The reference to a "zone" emphasises that a recommended position is an area within which the referee is likely to be most effective. The zone may be larger, smaller or differently shaped depending on the exact match circumstances.

Recommendations:

- The play should be between the referee and the lead AR
- The lead AR should be in the referee's field of vision so the referee should usually use a wide diagonal system
- Staying towards the outside of the play makes it easier to keep play and the lead AR in the referee's field of vision
- The referee should be close enough to see play without interfering with play
- "What needs to be seen" is not always in the vicinity of the ball. The referee should also pay attention to:
 - > player confrontations off the ball
 - > possible offences in the area towards which play is moving
 - > offences occurring after the ball is played away



Positioning of assistant referees and additional assistant referees

The AR must be in line with the second-last defender or the ball if it is nearer the goal line than the second-last defender. The AR must always face the field of play, even when running. Side-to-side movement should be used for short distances. This is especially important when judging offside as it gives the AR a better line of vision.

The AAR position is behind the goal line except where it is necessary to move onto the goal line to judge a goal/no goal situation. The AAR is not allowed to enter the field of play unless there are exceptional circumstances.



Referee



Assistant Referee



Additional assistant Referee



Goalkeeper (GK)



Defender



Attacker

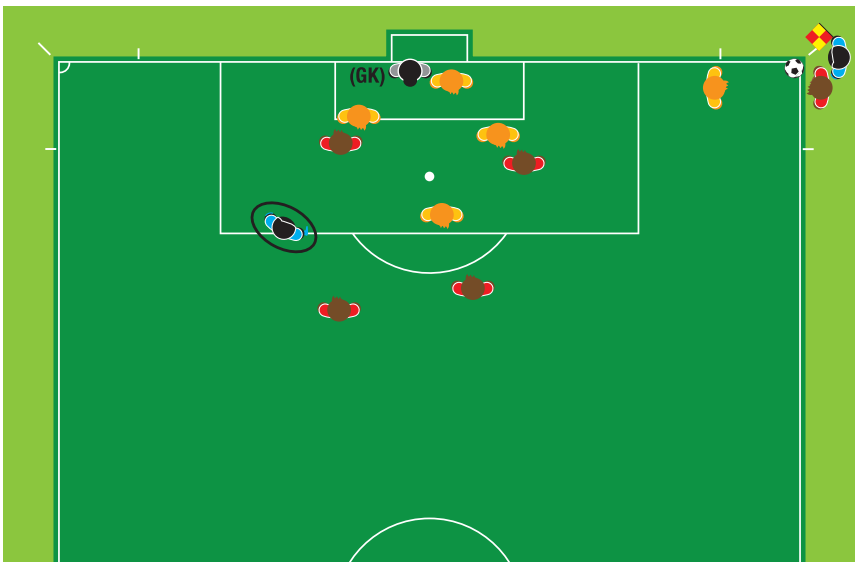
2. Positioning and teamwork

Consultation

When dealing with disciplinary issues, eye contact and a basic discreet hand signal from the AR to the referee may be sufficient. When direct consultation is required, the AR may advance 2-3 metres onto the field of play if necessary. When talking, the referee and AR should both face the field of play to avoid being heard by others and to observe the players and field of play.

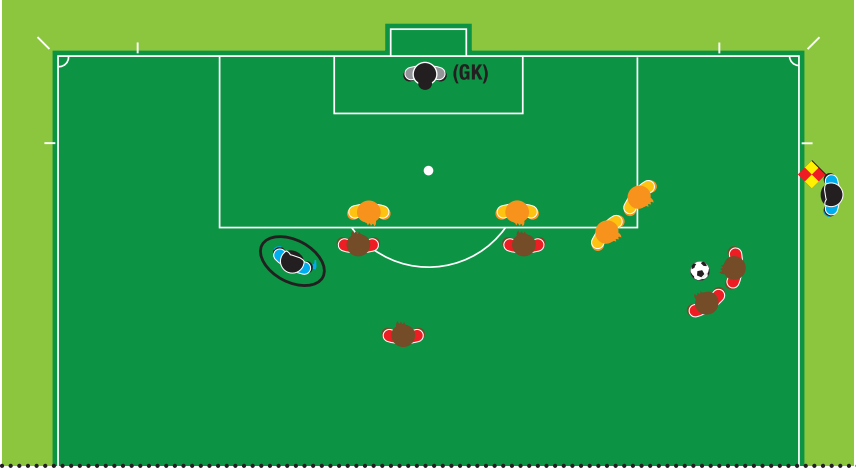
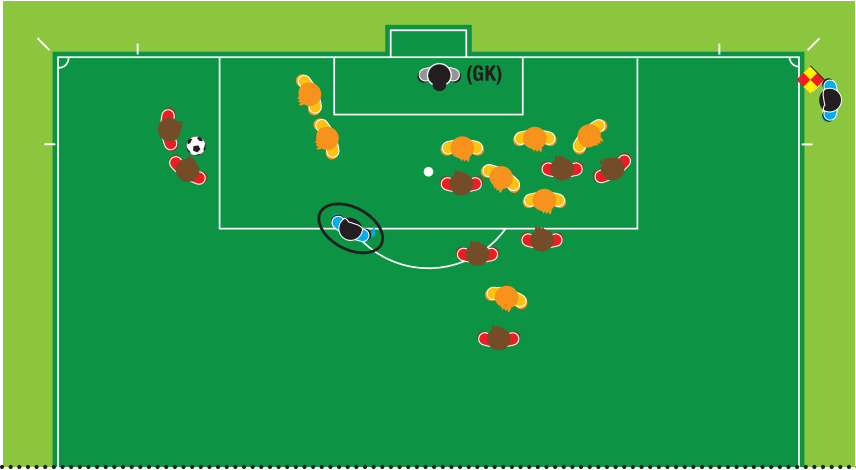
Corner kick

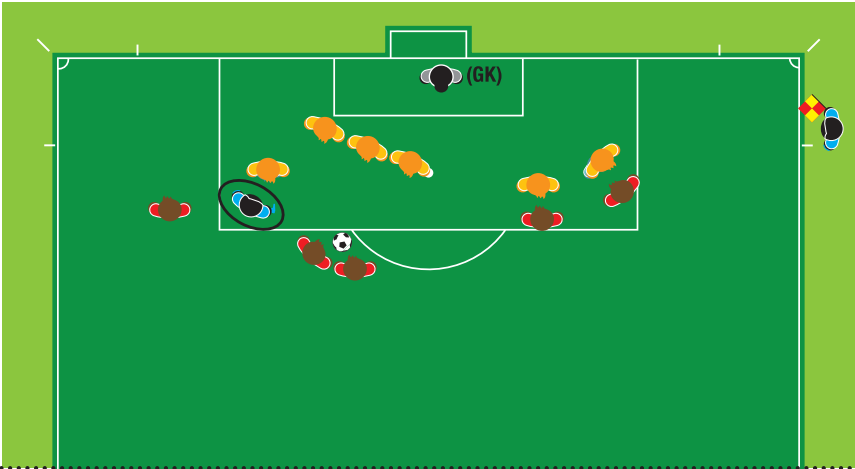
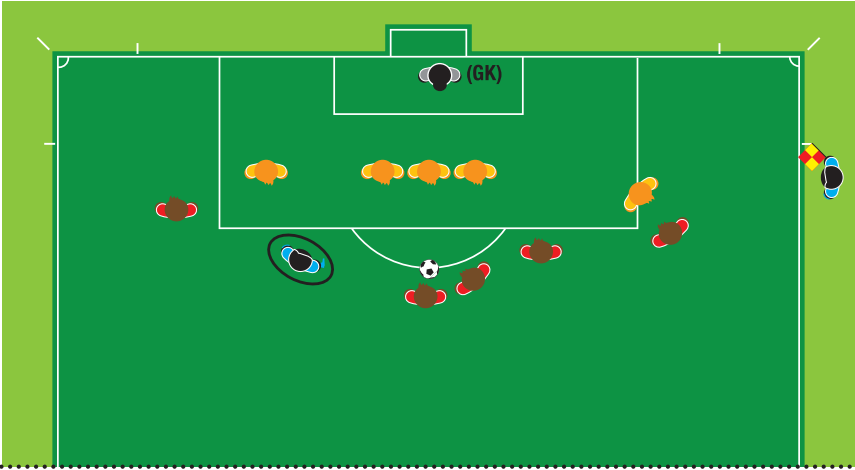
The AR's position for a corner kick is behind the corner flag in line with the goal line but the AR must not interfere with the player taking the corner kick and must check that the ball is properly placed in the corner area.



Free kick

The AR's position for a free kick must be in line with the second-last defender to check the offside line. However, the AR must be ready to follow the ball by moving down the touchline towards the corner flag if there is a direct shot on goal.



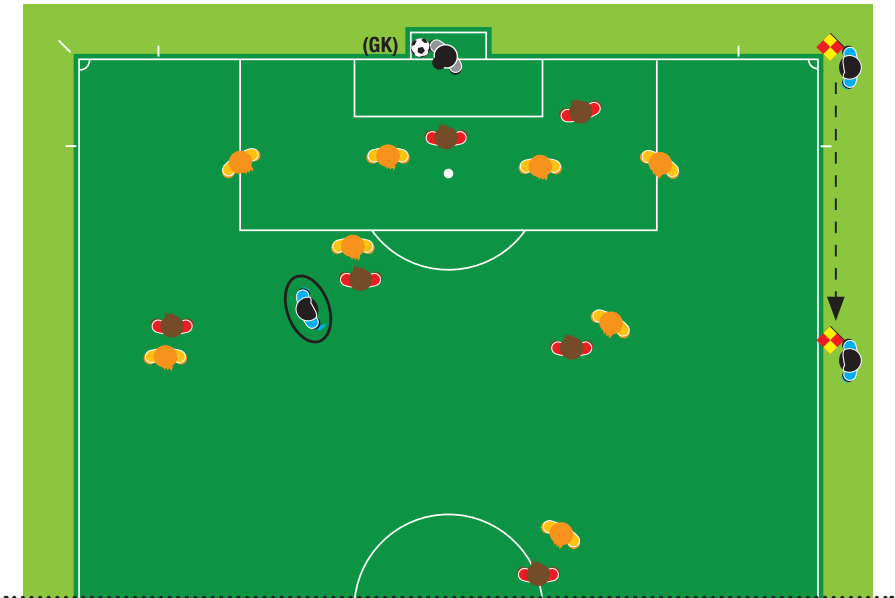


Goal/no goal

When a goal has been scored and there is no doubt about the decision, the referee and assistant referee must make eye contact and the assistant referee must then move quickly 25-30 metres along the touchline towards the halfway line without raising the flag.

When a goal has been scored but the ball appears still to be in play, the assistant referee must first raise the flag to attract the referee's attention then continue with the normal goal procedure of running quickly 25-30 metres along the touchline towards the halfway line.

On occasions when the whole of the ball does not cross the goal line and play continues as normal because a goal has not been scored, the referee must make eye contact with the assistant referee and if necessary give a discreet hand signal.

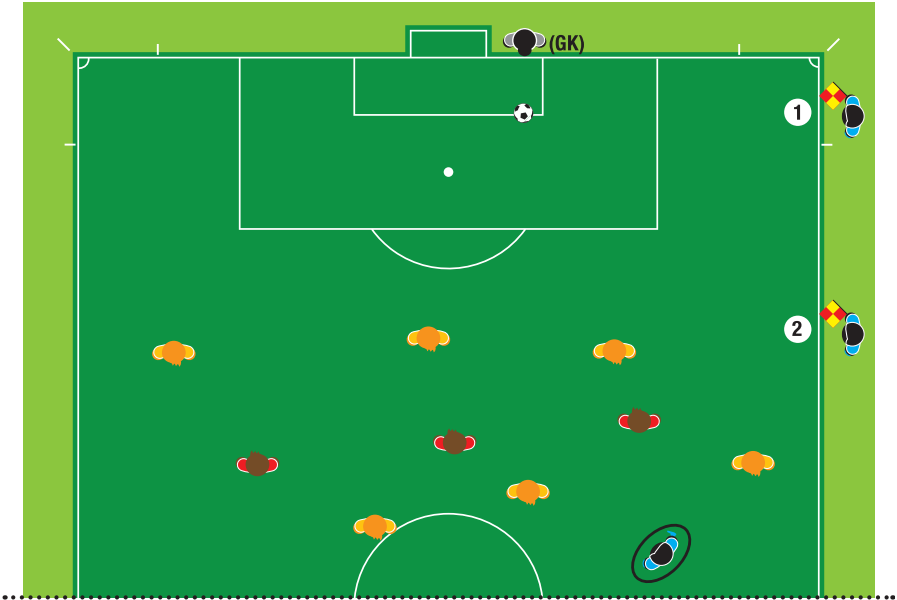


Goal kick

The AR must first check if the ball is inside the goal area. If the ball is not placed correctly, the AR must not move from the position, make eye contact with the referee and raise the flag. Once the ball is placed correctly inside the goal area, the AR must take a position to check the offside line.

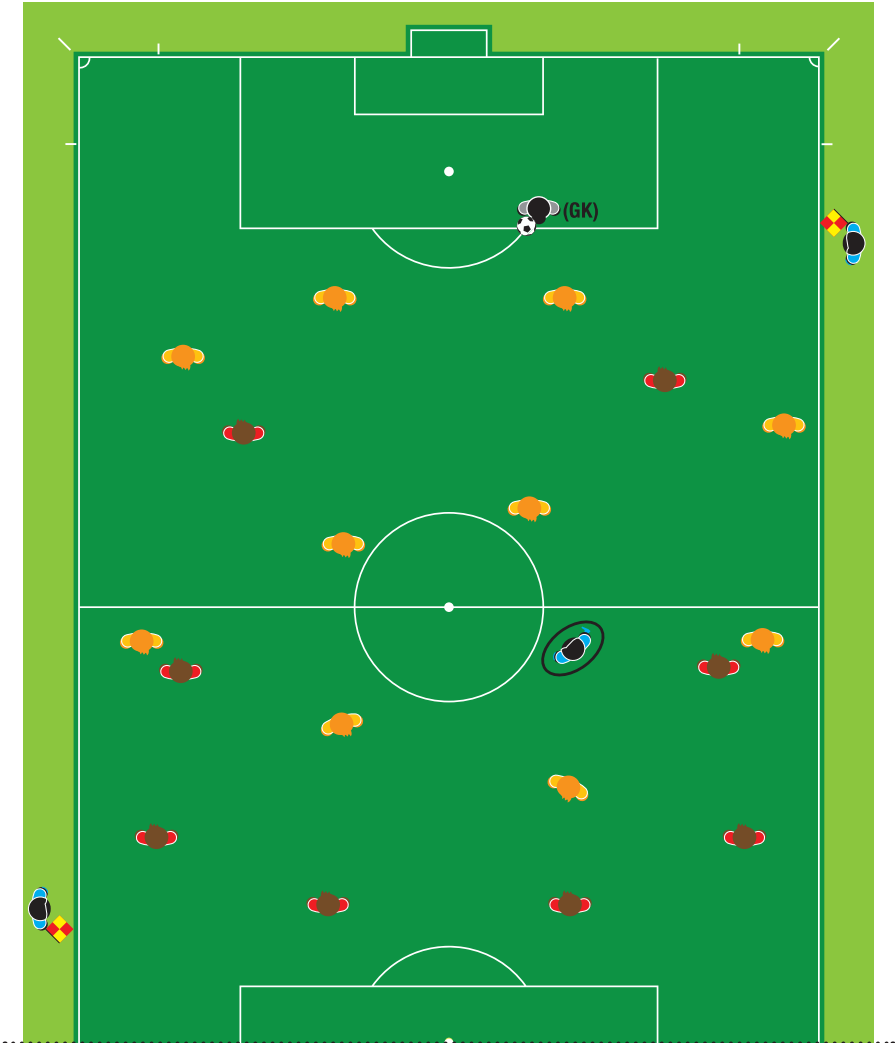
However, if there is an AAR, the AR should take up a position in line with the offside line and the AAR must be positioned at the intersection of the goal line and the goal area, and check if the ball is placed inside the goal area.

If the ball is not placed correctly, the AAR must communicate this to the referee.



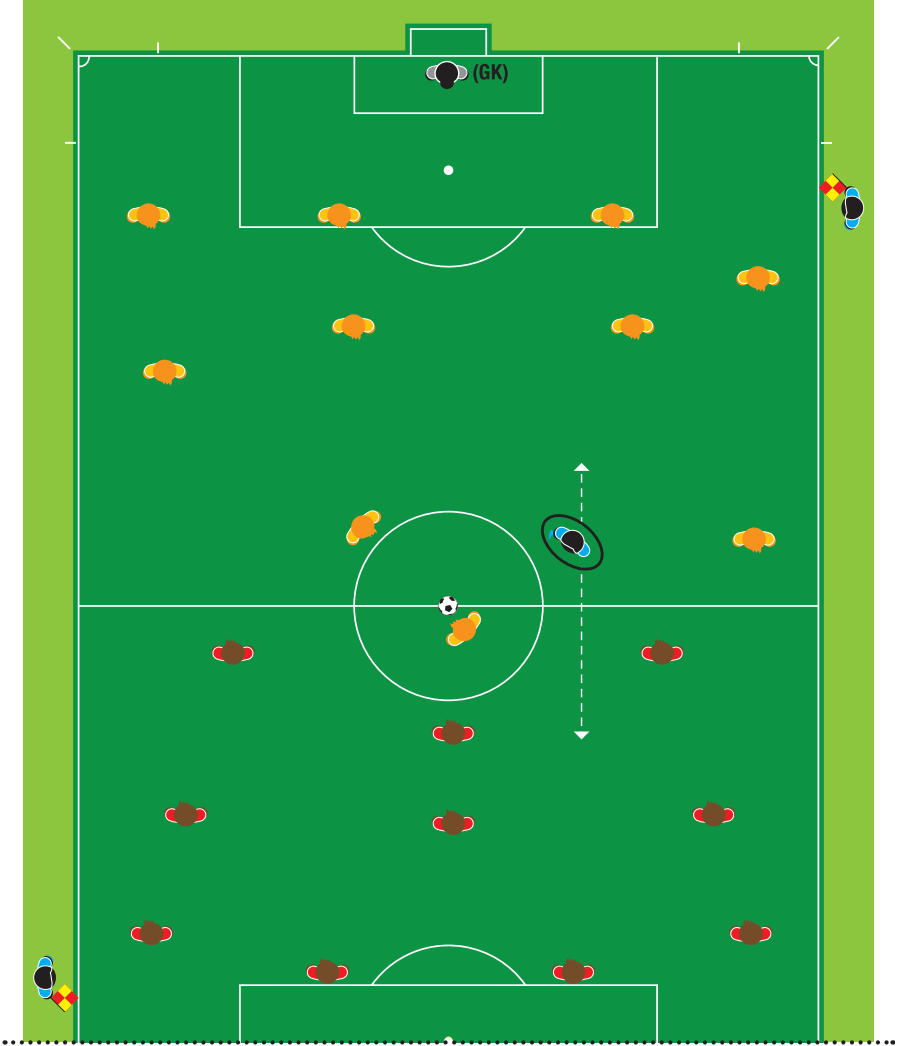
Goalkeeper releasing the ball

The AR must take a position in line with the edge of the penalty area and check that the goalkeeper does not handle the ball outside the penalty area. Once the goalkeeper has released the ball, the AR must take a position to check the offside line.



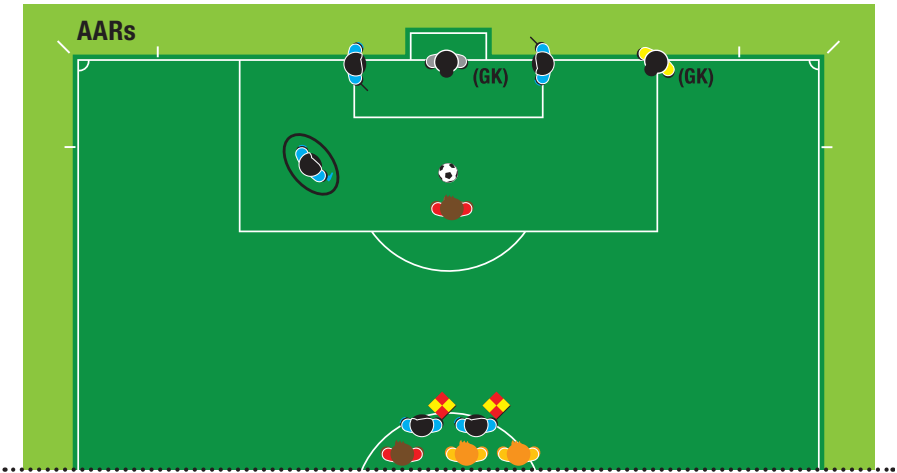
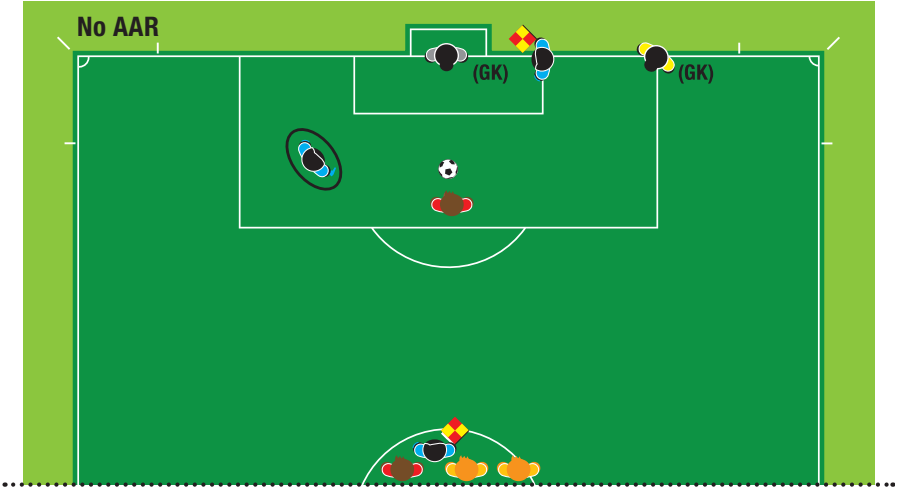
Kick-off

The ARs must be in line with the second-last defender.



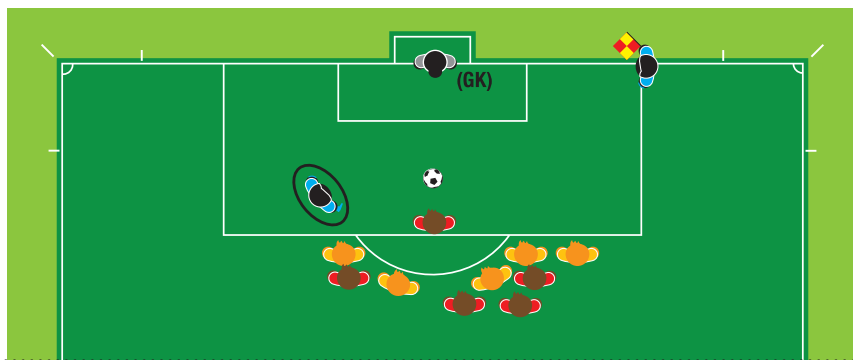
Kicks from the penalty mark

One AR must be positioned at the intersection of the goal line and the goal area. The other AR must be situated in the centre circle to control the players. If there are AARs, they must be positioned at each intersection of the goal line and the goal area, to the right and left of the goal respectively, except where GLT is in use when only one AAR is required. AAR2 and AR1 should monitor the players in the centre circle and AR2 and the fourth official should monitor the technical areas.

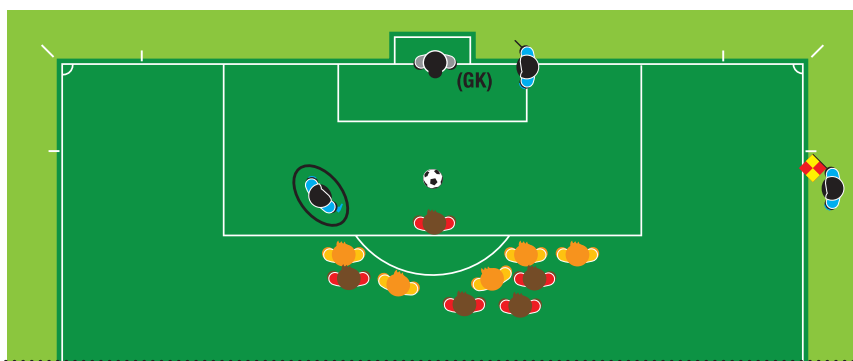


Penalty kick

The AR must be positioned at the intersection of the goal line and the penalty area.



Where there are AARs, the AAR must be positioned at the intersection of the goal line and the goal area and the AR is positioned in line with the penalty mark (which is the offside line).



Mass confrontation

In situations of mass confrontation, the nearest AR may enter the field of play to assist the referee. The other AR must observe and record details of the incident. The fourth official should remain in the vicinity of the technical areas.

Required distance

When a free kick is awarded very close to the AR, the AR may enter the field of play (usually at the request of the referee) to help ensure that the players are positioned 9.15 m (10 yds) from the ball. In this case, the referee must wait until the AR is back in position before restarting play.

Substitution

If there is no fourth official, the AR moves to the halfway line to assist with the substitution procedure; the referee must wait until the AR is back in position before restarting play. If there is a fourth official, the AR does not need to move to the halfway line as the fourth official carries out the substitution procedure unless there are several substitutions at the same time in which case the AR moves to the halfway line to assist the fourth official.

Body language, communication and whistle

1. Referees

Body language

Body language is a tool that the referee uses to:

- help control the match
- show authority and self-control

Body language is not an explanation of a decision.

Signals

See Law 5 for diagrams of signals

Whistle

The whistle is needed to:

- start play (1st and 2nd half of normal play and extra time), after a goal
- stop play:
 - > for a free kick or penalty kick
 - > if the match is suspended or abandoned
 - > at the end of each half
- restart play for:
 - > free kicks when the appropriate distance is required
 - > penalty kicks
- restart play after it has been stopped for a:
 - > caution or sending-off
 - > injury
 - > substitution

The whistle is NOT needed to:

- stop play for a clear:
 - > goal kick, corner kick, throw-in or goal
- restart play from:
 - > most free kicks, and a goal kick, corner kick, throw-in or dropped ball

A whistle which is used too frequently/unnecessarily will have less impact when it is needed.

If the referee wants the player(s) to wait for the whistle before restarting play (e.g. when ensuring that defending players are 9.15m at a free kick) the referee must clearly inform the attacking player(s) to wait for the whistle.

If the referee blows the whistle in error and play stops, play is restarted with a dropped ball.

2. Assistant referees

Beep signal

The beep signal system is an additional signal which is only used to gain the referee's attention. Situations when the signal beep may be useful include:

- offside
- offences (outside the view of the referee)
- throw-in, corner kick, goal kick or goal (tight decisions)

Electronic communication system

Where an electronic communication system is used, the referee will advise the ARs before the match as to when it may be appropriate to use the communication system with, or instead of, a physical signal.

Flag technique

The AR's flag must always be unfurled and visible to the referee. This usually means the flag is carried in the hand closest to the referee. When making a signal, the AR stops running, faces the field of play, makes eye contact with the referee and raises the flag with a deliberate (not hasty or exaggerated) motion. The flag should be like an extension of the arm. The ARs must raise the flag using the hand that will be used for the next signal. If circumstances change and the other hand must be used, the AR should move the flag to the opposite hand below the waist. If the AR signals that the ball is out of play, the signal must be maintained until the referee acknowledges it.

If the AR signals for a sending-off offence and the signal is not seen immediately:

- if play has been stopped, the restart may be changed in accordance with the Laws (free kick, penalty kick etc.)
- if play has restarted, the referee may still take disciplinary action but not penalise the offence with a free kick or penalty kick

Gestures

As a general rule, the AR should not use obvious hand signals. However, in some instances, a discreet hand signal may assist the referee. The hand signal should have a clear meaning which should have been agreed in the pre-match discussion.

Signals

See Law 6 for diagrams of signals

Corner kick / goal kick

When the ball wholly passes over the goal line the AR raises the flag with the right hand (better line of vision) to inform the referee that the ball is out of play and then if it is:

- near to the AR – indicate whether it is a goal kick or a corner kick
- far from the AR – make eye contact and follow the referee's decision

When the ball clearly passes over the goal line the AR does not need to raise the flag to indicate that the ball has left the field of play. If the goal kick or corner kick decision is obvious, it is not necessary to give a signal, especially when the referee gives a signal.

Fouls

The AR must raise the flag when a foul or misconduct is committed in the immediate vicinity or out of the referee's vision. In all other situations, the AR must wait and offer an opinion if it is required and then inform the referee what was seen and heard, and which players were involved.

Before signalling for an offence, the AR must determine that:

- the offence was out of the referee's view or the referee's view was obstructed
- the referee would not have applied the advantage

When an offence occurs which requires a signal from the AR, the AR must:

- raise the flag with the same hand that will also be used for the remainder of the signal – this gives the referee a clear indication as to who will be awarded the free kick
- make eye contact with the referee
- give the flag a slight wave back and forth (avoiding any excessive or aggressive movement)

The AR must use the "wait and see technique" to allow play to continue and not raise the flag when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from the advantage; it is therefore very important for the AR to make eye contact with the referee.

Fouls inside the penalty area

When a foul is committed by a defender inside the penalty area out of the vision of the referee, especially if near to the AR's position, the AR must first make eye contact with the referee to see where the referee is positioned and what action has been taken. If the referee has not taken any action, the AR must signal with the flag, use the electronic beep signal and then visibly move down the touchline towards the corner flag.

Fouls outside the penalty area

When a foul is committed by a defender outside the penalty area (near the boundary of the penalty area), the AR should make eye contact with the referee, to see the referee's position and what action has been taken, and signal with the flag if necessary. In counter-attack situations, the AR should be able to give information such as whether or not a foul has been committed and whether a foul was committed inside or outside the penalty area, and what disciplinary action should be taken. The AR should make a clear movement along the touchline towards the halfway line to indicate when the offence took place outside the penalty area.

Goal-no goal

When it is clear that the ball has wholly passed over the goal line in the goal, the AR must make eye contact with the referee without giving any additional signal.

When a goal has been scored but it is not clear whether the ball has passed over the line, the AR must first raise the flag to attract the referee's attention and then confirm the goal.

Offside

The first action of the AR for an offside decision is to raise the flag (using the right hand, giving the AR a better line of vision) and then if the referee stops play use the

flag to indicate the area of the field of play in which the offence occurred. If the flag is not immediately seen by the referee, the AR must maintain the signal until it has been acknowledged or the ball is clearly in the control of the defending team.

Penalty kick

If the goalkeeper blatantly moves off the goal line before the ball is kicked and a goal is not scored, the AR must raise the flag.

Substitution

Once the AR has been informed (by the fourth official or team official) that a substitution is requested, the AR must signal this to the referee at the next stoppage.

Throw-in

When the ball wholly passes over the touchline:

- near to the AR – a direct signal should be made to indicate the direction of the throw-in
- far from the AR and the throw-in decision is an obvious one – the AR must make a direct signal to indicate the direction of the throw-in
- far from the AR and the AR is in doubt about the direction of the throw-in – the AR must raise the flag to inform the referee that the ball is out of play, make eye contact with the referee and follow the referee's signal

3. Additional assistant referees

The AARs use a radio communication system (not flags) to communicate with the referee. If the radio communication system fails to work, the AARs will use an electronic signal beep flagstick. AARs do not usually use obvious hand signals but, in some instances, a discreet hand signal may give valuable support to the referee. The hand signal should have a clear meaning and such signals should be agreed in the pre-match discussion.

The AAR, having assessed that the ball has wholly passed over the goal line within the goal, must:

- immediately inform the referee via the communication system that a goal should be awarded

- make a clear signal with the left arm perpendicular to the goal line pointing towards the centre of the field (flagstick in the left hand is also required). This signal is not required when the ball has very clearly passed over the goal line.

The referee will make the final decision.

Other advice

1. Advantage

The referee may play advantage whenever an offence occurs but should consider the following in deciding whether to apply the advantage or stop play:

- the severity of the offence – if the offence warrants a sending-off, the referee must stop play and send off the player unless there is a clear opportunity to score a goal
- the position where the offence was committed – the closer to the opponent's goal, the more effective the advantage can be
- the chances of an immediate, promising attack
- the atmosphere of the match

2. Allowance for time lost

Many stoppages in play are entirely natural (e.g. throw-ins, goal kicks). An allowance is made only when delays are excessive.

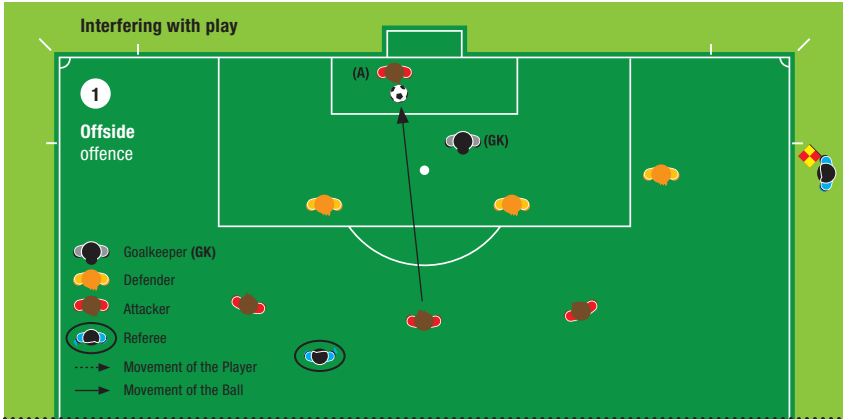
3. Holding an opponent

Referees are reminded to make an early intervention and to deal firmly with holding offences, especially inside the penalty area at corner kicks and free kicks. To deal with these situations:

- the referee must warn any player holding an opponent before the ball is in play
- caution the player if the holding continues before the ball is in play
- award a direct free kick or penalty kick and caution the player if it happens once the ball is in play

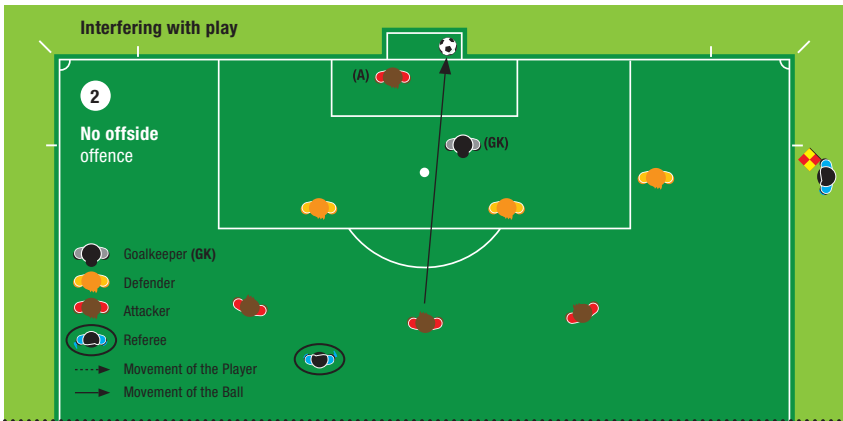
4. Offside

1 – Interfering with play – offside offence



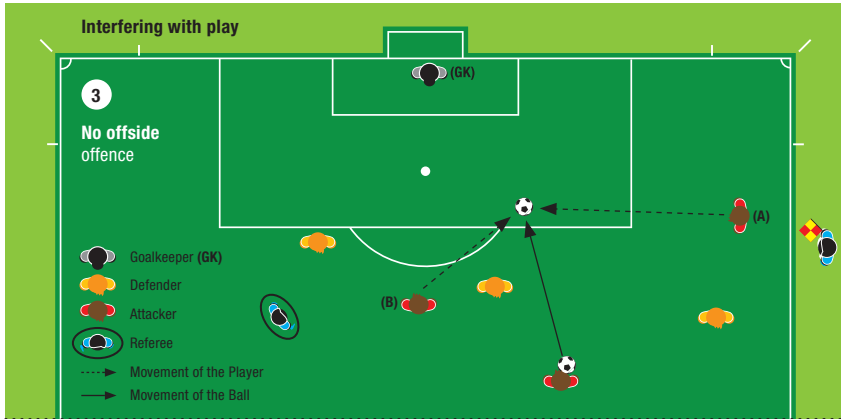
An attacker **in an offside position (A)**, not interfering with an opponent, **touches the ball**. The assistant referee must raise the flag when the player **touches the ball**.

2 – Interfering with play – no offside offence



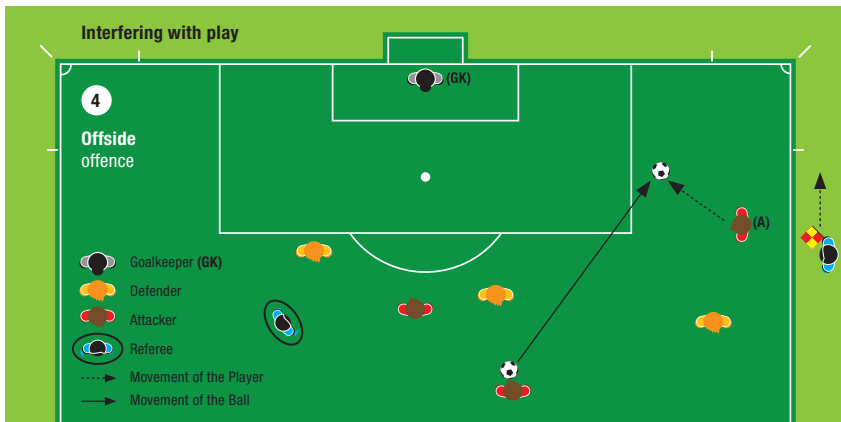
An attacker **in an offside position (A)**, not interfering with an opponent, **does not touch the ball**. The player did not touch the ball, so cannot be penalised.

3 – Interfering with play – no offside offence



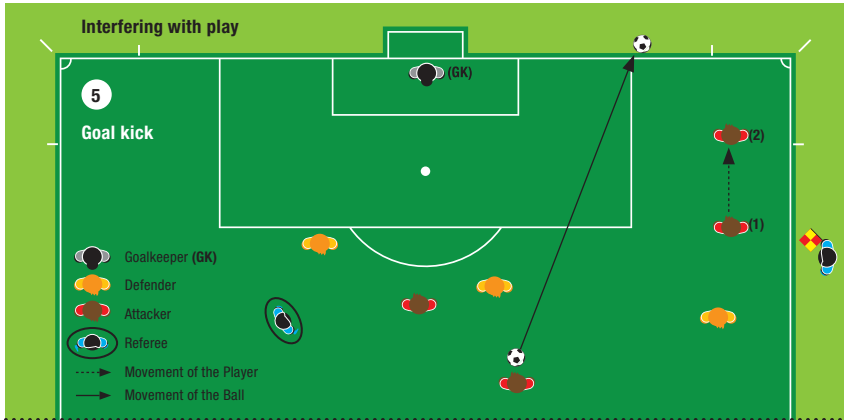
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) runs towards the ball and a team-mate **in an inside position** (B) also runs towards the ball and plays it. (A) did not touch the ball, so cannot be penalised.

4 – Interfering with play – offside offence



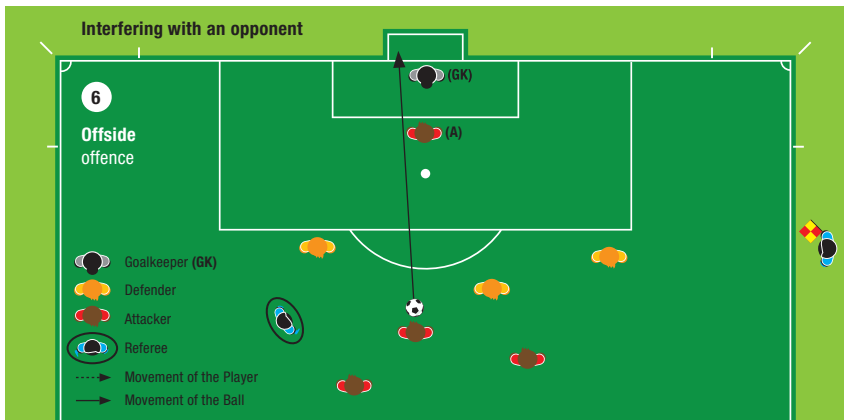
A player **in an offside position** (A) may be penalised before playing or touching the ball, if, in the opinion of the referee, no other team-mate in an inside position has the opportunity to play the ball.

5 – Interfering with play – goal kick



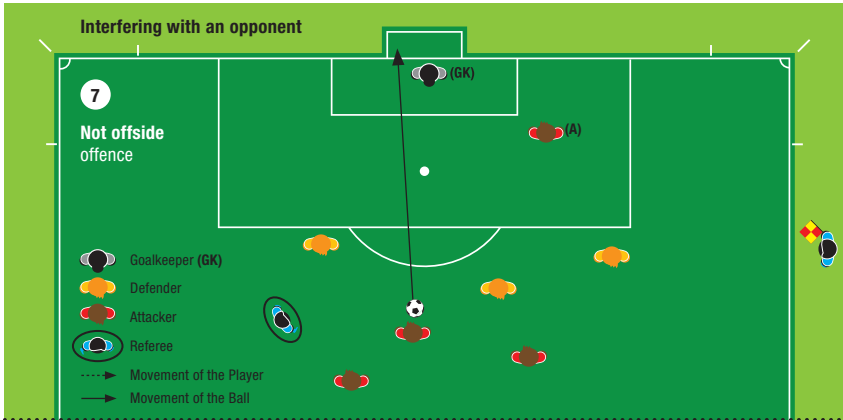
An attacker **in an offside position** (1) runs towards the ball and **does not touch** the ball. The assistant referee must signal “**goal kick**”.

6 – Interfering with an opponent – offside offence



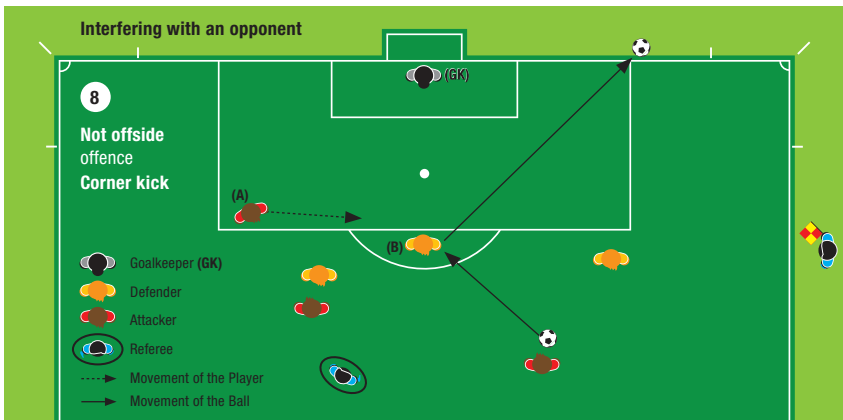
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) is clearly obstructing the goalkeeper's line of vision. The player must be penalised for preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball.

7 – Interfering with an opponent – no offside offence



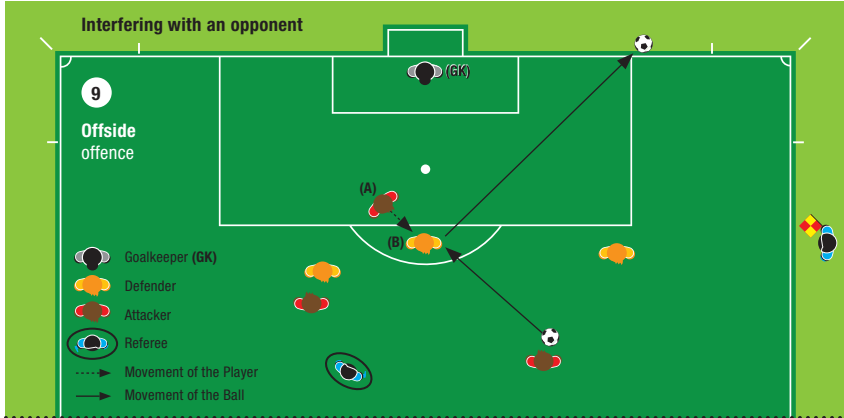
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) is **not** clearly obstructing the goalkeeper's line of vision or challenging an opponent for the ball.

8 – Interfering with an opponent – not offside offence – corner kick



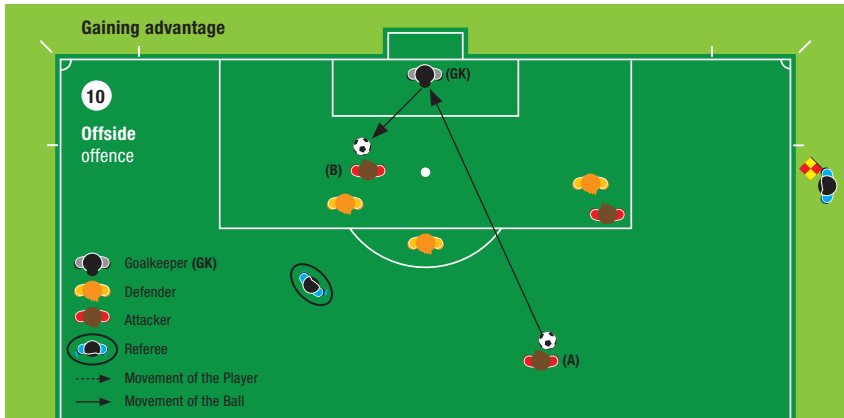
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) runs towards the ball but does not prevent the opponent from playing or being able to play the ball. (A) is **not** challenging an opponent (B) for the ball.

9 – Interfering with an opponent – offside offence



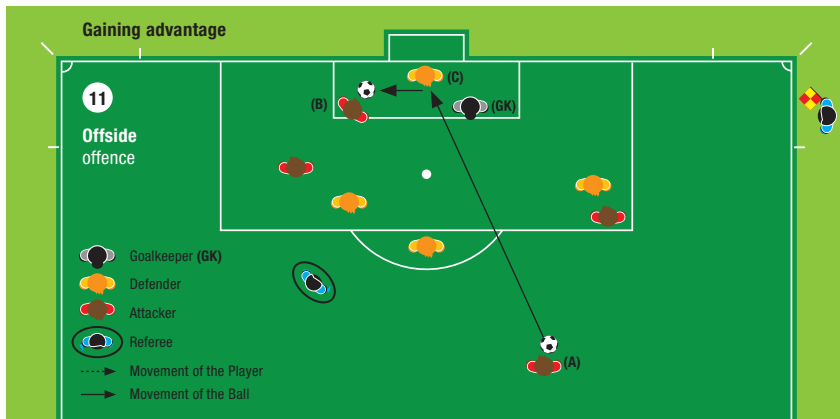
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) runs towards the ball preventing the opponent (B) from playing or being able to play the ball by challenging the opponent for the ball. (A) is challenging an opponent (B) for the ball.

10 – Gaining advantage – offside offence



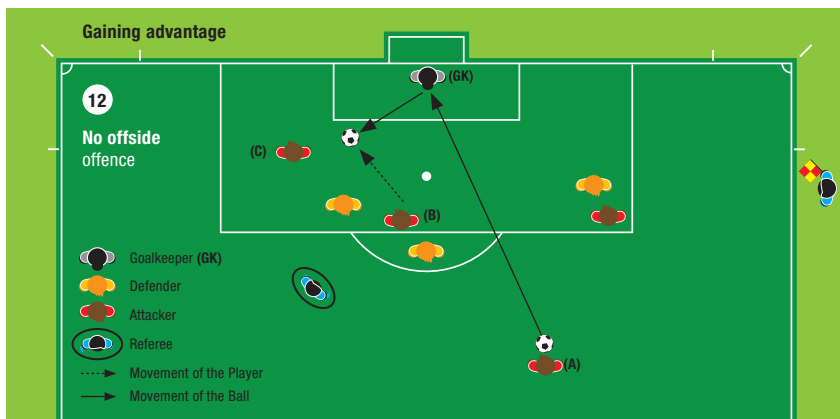
An attacker **in an offside position** (B) is penalised for **playing or touching the ball** that rebounds, is deflected or is played from a deliberate save by the goalkeeper having been **in an offside position** when the ball was last touched or is played by a team-mate.

11 – Gaining advantage – offside offence



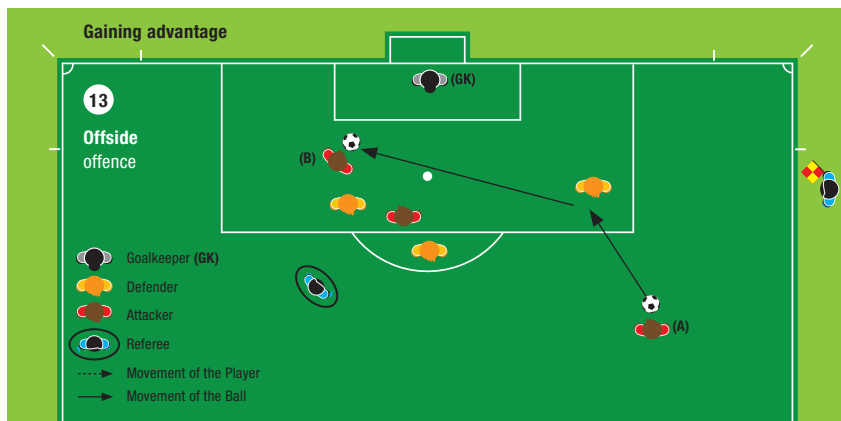
An attacker **in an offside position** (B) is penalised for **playing or touching the ball** that rebounds or is deflected from a deliberate save by a player from the defending team (C) having been **in an offside position** when the ball was last touched or is played by a team-mate.

12 – Gaining advantage – no offside offence



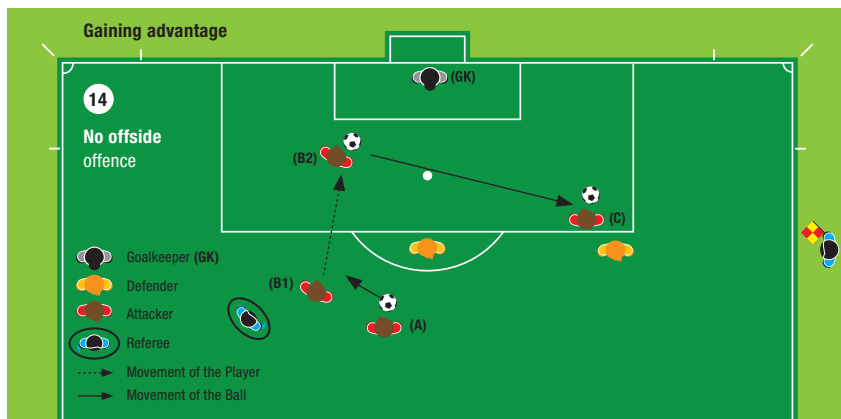
The shot by a team-mate (A) rebounds from the goalkeeper, (B) is in an onside position and plays the ball, (C) **in an offside position** is not penalised because the player did not gain an advantage from being in that position because the player did not touch the ball.

13 – Gaining advantage – offside offence



The shot by a team-mate (A) rebounds off or is deflected by an opponent to attacker (B) who is penalised for **playing or touching the ball** having previously been **in an offside position**.

14 – Gaining advantage – no offside offence



An attacker (C) is **in an offside position**, not interfering with an opponent, when a team-mate (A) passes the ball to player (B1) in an onside position who runs towards the opponents' goal and passes the ball (B2) to team-mate (C). Attacker (C) was **in an onside position** when the ball was passed, so cannot be penalised.

5. Treatment/assessment after a caution/sending-off offence

Previously, an injured player who received medical attention on the field of play had to leave before the restart. This can be unfair if an opponent caused the injury as the offending team has a numerical advantage when play restarts.

However, this requirement was introduced because players often unsportingly used an injury to delay the restart for tactical reasons.

As a balance between these two unfair situations, The IFAB has decided that only for a physical offence where the opponent is cautioned or sent off, an injured player can be quickly assessed/treated and then remain on the field of play.

In principle, the delay should not be any longer than currently occurs when a medical person(s) comes on the field to assess an injury. The difference is that the point at which the referee used to require the medical person(s) and the player to leave is now the point at which the medical staff leave but the player can remain.

To ensure the injured player does not use/extend the delay unfairly, referees are advised to:

- be aware of the match situation and any potential tactical reason to delay the restart
- inform the injured player that if medical treatment is required it must be quick
- signal for the medical person(s) (not the stretchers) and, if possible, remind them to be quick

When the referee decides play should restart either:

- the medical person(s) leaves and the player remains or
- the player leaves for further assessment/treatment (stretcher signal may be necessary)

As a general guide, the restart should not be delayed for more than about 20–25 seconds beyond the point when everyone was ready for play to restart.

The referee must make full allowance for the stoppage.

**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION
FOR AUSTRALIAN
MATCH
OFFICIALS**

Referees Committee

Functions of the Referees Committee

The functions of the Referees Committee (RC) are to:

- a) Review and approve the national strategy for refereeing in Australia aligned to FFA's overall strategy.
- b) Monitor implementation of the national strategy for refereeing in Australia.
- c) Recommend appointment of referees to international matches organised by FFA, or for other tournaments, whenever requested to do so.
- d) Nominate eligible referees for the FIFA Refereeing International Lists for international referees, assistant referees, futsal referees and beach soccer referees.
- e) Provide advice to ensure uniform implementation of the Laws of the Game.
- f) Provide strategic direction on the education and development of Australia's referees.
- g) Consider and develop strategic policy and advice aimed at improving refereeing structures throughout Australia at community and elite levels of the game.
- h) From time to time provide specific analysis and proposals on referee strategic and policy matters to FFA Management for consideration as appropriate.
- i) Propose to the FFA Board from time to time external experts or sub-committees to provide additional advice to the Committee and Management.
- j) Maintain oversight of FFA's implementation of the FIFA Regulations on the Organisation of Refereeing within Australia having regard to and adapting their implementation to Australia's specific circumstances.
- k) Provide advice and recommendations to the Board of FFA on strategic matters relating to refereeing to ensure alignment with and support delivery of the overall FFA strategy.

Minimum standards for national and international lists

The RC has set minimum levels of qualification for match officials to be nominated to or selected for the following lists and panels effective 1 January 2016.

List / Panel	FFA Qualification
FIFA Referee	Level 1 Referee
FIFA Assistant Referee	Level 1 Referee (Theory)
Hyundai A-League Referee	Level 1 Referee
Hyundai A-League Assistant Referee	Level 1 Referee (Theory)
Hyundai A-League Fourth Official	Level 1 Referee
Westfield W-League Referee	Level 1 Referee (Theory)
Westfield W-League Assistant Referee	Level 2 Referee
Foxtel National Youth League Referee	Level 2 Referee (Theory)
Foxtel National Youth League Assistant Referee	Level 3 Referee

State Referees Committees

Each Member Federation also has a State Referees Committee (SRC) to manage the development of match officials within their area of responsibility.

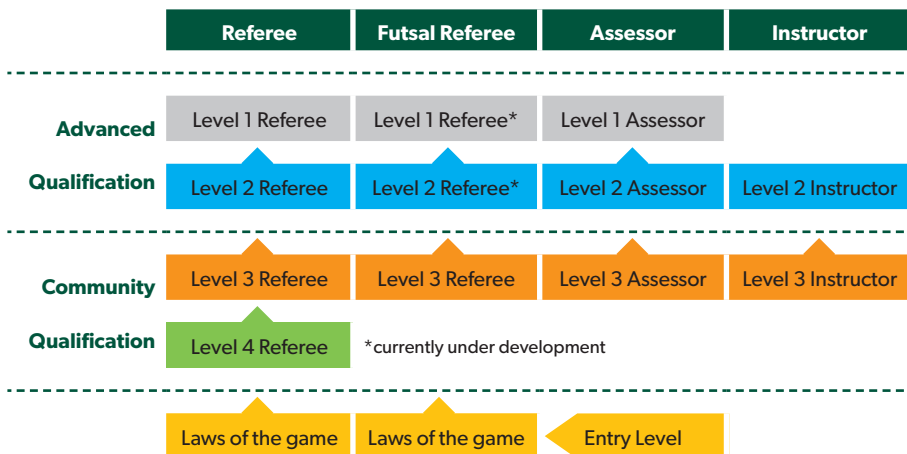
Officiating in Australia

Introduction

The structure and management of match official qualification is documented within FFA's Australian Officiating Development Schedule (AODS). It outlines the career paths and professional development of all football match officials – referees, assessors and instructors. A copy of the AODS is available from the refereeing section of the FFA website under Get Involved – Refereeing: www.ffa.com.au

Summary of training programs

Below is a diagrammatic representation of the pathways for Referees, Assessors and Instructors.



Referee training programs

Laws of the Game – Introduction to the Laws

This online training module provides an introduction to the Laws of the Game. The certificate is valid for two years. playfootball.com.au/referee/laws-of-the-game

Note: Once you complete this online training module you need to complete the Level 4 Referee training program before you can officially referee or be appointed to officiate matches.

Level 4 Referee – development of basic skills

Local referee groups present this program to aspiring referees before they are appointed to matches. It is aimed at developing referees who referee junior and youth matches.

Level 3 Referee – skill consolidation

This program is aimed at developing referees who referee lower divisions of adult football as well as junior and youth matches. Level 4 Referees should be encouraged to undertake this program within the first two years of becoming an active referee.

Level 2 Referee – development of advanced officiating

This program is aimed at developing referees who referee matches ranging from junior to the penultimate level of senior football in their State, Territory or region. To finalise the program's practical competencies candidates need to be assessed during senior matches at Association or State-level matches or as determined by FFA. The final assessment component of this program is the review of the referee's program folder by their Member Federations' State Referees Committee.

Level 1 Referee – senior officiating, commitment to excellence

Referees who complete this training program are considered qualified to officiate matches from junior to the highest level of senior football in their State or Territory and potentially at national level. To finalise this program's practical competencies candidates need to be assessed during National Premier League matches or as determined by FFA. The final assessment component of this program is the review of the referee's program folder by their Member Federations' State Referees Committee and FFA.

Level 2 and Level 1 Referee theory components

Referees are able to undertake the theory component of the Level 2 and Level 1 Referee programs without the requirement to undertake the practical component.

If you are interested in this aspect of your development as a referee you should talk to your Member Federation referee manager or State Referees Committee.

Referee Assessor qualifications

- Level 3** Referee assessors coaching match officials at local or regional level of football
- Level 2** Referee assessors coaching match officials at regional or State level of football
- Level 1** Referee assessors coaching match officials at any level of football

Referee Instructor qualifications

- Level 3** Instructors delivering FFA programs for referees at local or regional level
- Level 2** Instructors delivering FFA programs for match officials at State or national level

How does qualification work?

When you successfully complete a training program (except the Laws of the Game) you are granted qualification for a period of four years. All qualifications expire on 31 December. The date of qualification expiry is calculated from the first day of the training program. For example if a Level 2 Referee training program commenced on 14 February 2018 the qualification will expire on 31 December 2022.

How do I maintain my qualification?

Every four years you need to revalidate your qualification. During that time you need to be active in at least two of those four years as well as undertake a number of activities during those active years. During the final year of your qualification you must also successfully pass Laws of the Game examinations (excluding Level 4 Referees).

To maintain your status as an active match official and be appointed to officiate in matches your qualification must be current. You can either upgrade your qualification to the next level (e.g. upgrade from Level 4 Referee to Level 3 Referee) or you can revalidate your qualification.

There are two options to revalidate a qualification:

- a) Undertake the same level of training program again; or
- b) Undertake the required activities to revalidate the qualification.


The activities to be undertaken are documented in the Officials Log section of this publication as well as the within the AODS. A copy of the AODS is available from refereeing section of the FFA website under *Get Involved – Resources* www.ffa.com.au

National Policy on the wearing of jewellery

Medical alert bracelets and necklaces

These may be worn as long as they are secured to the wrist or body. The medical advice must not be covered.

Specific information

Beaded hair	If a player is wearing hair beads the hair must be tied in a bun or covered by a hair net. Loose beaded hair should not be allowed.
Bobby pins	Bobby pins, whether plastic or metal, may be worn. 
Bracelets	All bracelets (including metal, rope, fabric, leather, etc.) must be removed. Medical alert bracelets may be worn provided they are taped securely to the wrist. The medical information must not be covered by tape.
Body piercing	Piercing not visible to the referee is of no concern. Should the piercing become visible the referee will ensure the item is removed.
Earrings	No earrings are acceptable. The practice of taping earrings is not acceptable.
Facial ring	Any kind of jewellery on the face or around the eyes must be removed.
GPS units or heart rate monitors	Electronic Performance and Tracking Systems are permitted in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
Necklaces	All necklaces must be removed. Medical alert necklaces may be worn provided they are taped securely to the chest. The medical information must not be covered by tape.
Rings	No rings may be worn. The taping of wedding rings is not permitted.
Tongue piercing	Rings/studs through the tongue are discouraged for the players' own safety. Should the referee detect a tongue piercing, the referee will ensure it is removed.
Watches	Players (but not match officials) must remove all watches.

Any player not complying with this Policy should not be allowed to play.

Referees

Within the spirit of these guidelines, referees are expected to conform to the standards set for players (with the exception of wearing watches and GPS units / heart rate monitors).

Helpful tips and information

Here are some tips especially for newer match officials.

Be prepared

Your match-day bag should contain the following items:

- A watch with stopwatch function
- Yellow and red cards
- Whistles
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle (full)
- Notebook
- Pens/pencils
- Coin to toss at start of the match
- Snacks
- Wet weather gear
- Flags for the assistant referees or club-supplied assistant referee

Know the Laws of the Game

Keep a copy of this book in your match-day bag to reference at matches. Read and know the Laws of the Game – particularly any changes from the previous season.

Know the rules of the local competition, including:

- Length of the halves and half-time break
- Size of ball
- What you do with any match or incident report
- Number of players and substitutions / interchange

Match officials are athletes too

Match officials are athletes. You need to prepare yourself for a match in a similar way to players. This includes pre-match nutrition, hydration, stretching (before and after a match) and injury management. FIFA have a number of resources available that are useful for officials as well as players.

These include:

- Practical guide to eating and drinking
- Football for Health

www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/medical

The Australian Sports Commission also has useful information regarding nutrition:

www.sportaus.gov.au/ais/nutrition

as well as valuable resources to all sports including officials including:

Communication

- Communicating with participants
- Managing conflict

Officiating children

- Child protection for officials
- Officiating children's sport

Match day

- Competition diet
- Hydration
- Dealing with abuse
- What is expected of an official

Safety and ethics

- Ethics in sport
- Safety and risk management

High performance officiating

- Meal times and nutrition for travel
- Recovery

Team officials

Team official including coaches, managers, trainers or physiotherapists are not permitted to enter the field, during play, unless given permission by the referee.

Liquid refreshments

Players are entitled to take liquid refreshments during a stoppage in the match but only on the touchline. It is not permitted to throw plastic water bags or any other containers onto the field.

Penalty kick sequence

Here is a sequence that can benefit referees by providing a step-by-step guide to the tasks involved and to ensure no details are missed.

- Observe the incident.
- Decide whether to stop the match – if so blow the whistle.
- Point to the penalty mark.
- If a caution or sending-off is required do it first.
- Run to the junction of the goal line and the goal area line on the left hand side of goal whilst checking over your shoulder to see if there is any trouble.
- Turn and face the players.
- Use your hand(s) as a 'stop' signal to discourage players coming over to argue. Caution if necessary.
- Walk to the penalty mark.
- Ask "Who is taking the kick?"
- Have the nominated player place the ball. If you are not happy with the ball placement get the player to move it. Do not touch the ball yourself.
- Tell the goalkeeper to stand on the goal line between the goal posts.
- Ensure all players, other than the goalkeeper and the player taking the kick, are outside the penalty area – and the penalty arc – and behind the ball.
- Tell them "No one comes in until the kick is taken!" and back away to the left hand side of the goal area.
- Check that the goalkeeper is standing on the goal line.
- Face up the field at 45 degrees to the goal line.
- Blow the whistle.
- Watch for encroachment – you can see the player taking the kick out of the corner of your eye.
- As the penalty takers' foot reaches the side of the ball pivot left about 135 degrees (that's 1½ right angles). If the goalkeeper still has at least part of one foot touching, or in line, with the goal line by this stage any subsequent movement will be irrelevant.
- If the ball doesn't come immediately the kicker may have illegally feinted.

FIFA Considerations for Analysis of Match Situations

Fouls & Misconduct: Careless, Reckless, Using Excessive Force and Violent Conduct

- 1 Does the player show a lack of attention or consideration when making the challenge?
- 2 Does the player act without precaution when making the challenge?
- 3 Does the player make fair or unfair contact with the opponent after touching the ball?
- 4 Does the player act with disregard to the danger for the opponent?
- 5 Does the player act with disregard to consequences for the opponent?
- 6 Does the player have a chance of playing the ball in a fair manner?
- 7 Does the challenge put the opponent in a dangerous situation?
- 8 Does the player touch the ball after making contact with the opponent?
- 9 Does the player use excessive force and endanger the safety of the opponent?
- 10 Does the player use brutality against the opponent when challenging for the ball?
- 11 Does the challenge endanger the safety of the opponent?
- 12 What degree of speed and/or intensity is the player using when making the challenge?
- 13 Does the player show clear malice when making the challenge?
- 14 Does the player lunge on the opponent from the front, from the side or from behind?
- 15 Which part of the body has the player used to make contact?
- 16 Does the player use studs when making a tackle?
- 17 On which part of the opponent's body is contact made?
- 18 In which direction are the tackler's feet pointing?
- 19 Does the player challenge for the ball at the moment the contact is made?
- 20 Does the player charge the opponent in a fair manner?
- 21 Do you consider the foul an act of violent conduct or a serious foul play?
- 22 Has the challenge been committed in a fair manner or a careless manner?
- 23 Does the player use the arm as a 'tool' or a 'weapon'?
- 24 Does the player challenge for the ball in a fair manner?
- 25 Does the player attempt to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball?
- 26 Is the force used to strike the player's head/face negligible?
- 27 Does the player throw an object at the ball, opponent or match official?
- 28 Does the player commit an offence outside the field of play against someone from his own team?
- 29 Does the player bite or spit at someone?
- 30 Does the player's action threaten to cause injury to someone including the player himself?

Interfere with or Stop a Promising Attack

- 31 What is the distance between the offence and the goal?
- 32 Does the player have control of the ball?
- 33 Can the player gain control of the ball?
- 34 What is the direction of play?
- 35 How many defenders are involved in the situation?
- 36 Where are the defenders located?
- 37 How many attackers are involved in the situation?
- 38 Where are the attackers located?
- 39 How many options to pass the ball did the player have when he was fouled?
- 40 Does the foul interfere with or stop a promising attack?
- 41 Does the handball offence interfere with or stop a promising attack?

42 Does the player commit an offence inside his/her own penalty area (whilst attempting to play the ball) to interfere with or stop a promising attack?

Denying a Goal or a Goalscoring Opportunity

- 51 What is the distance between the offence and the goal?
- 52 Is there a likelihood of the player keeping control of the ball?
- 53 Is there a likelihood of the player gaining control of the ball?
- 54 What is the general direction of play?
- 55 How many defenders are involved in the situation?
- 56 Where are the defenders located?
- 57 Is the offence a direct free kick or an indirect free kick?
- 58 If there is no offence, does the player have an obvious opportunity to score a goal?
- 59 Does the player deliberately handle the ball to deny the opposing team a goal?
- 60 Does the player hold, pull or push an opponent to deny an opponent an obvious goalscoring opportunity?
- 61 Does the player commit an offence inside his/her own penalty area (whilst attempting to play the ball) to deny an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity?
- 62 Does the player making the challenge inside own penalty area have a possibility to play the ball and deny an opponent an obvious goal – scoring opportunity?
- 63 Did the referee apply advantage in a goal-scoring opportunity and caution the player when the ball was out of play?

Handling the Ball, Holding and Impeding

- 71 Is the hand moving towards the ball or is the ball moving towards the hand?
- 72 Are the player's hands or arms in a "natural position" or an "unnatural position"?
- 73 Does the player attempt to avoid the ball striking the hand?

74 Does the ball strike the player's hand from a short or from a long distance?

75 Does the player use the hand or arm to deliberately touch or block the ball?

76 Does the player attempt to score a goal by deliberately handling the ball?

77 Does the player prevent a goal by deliberately handling the ball?

78 Does the player prevent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball?

79 Does the player try to deceive the referee by handling the ball?

80 Is the ball moving in the direction of the goal?

81 Does holding start from outside the penalty area and continue inside?

82 Does the player impede the progress of an opponent with contact?

83 Does the player impede the progress of an opponent with the hands?

84 Does the player unsuccessfully attempt to prevent a goal by deliberately handling the ball?

85 Does the player make contact with the ball with a held object?

86 Does the player touch the ball with his/her hand/arm when the hand/arm has made his/her body unnaturally bigger?

87 Does the player touch the ball with his/her hand/arm when the hand/arm is above/beyond his/her shoulder level?

88 Does the ball touch the player's hand/arm directly from his/her own head or body (including the foot)?

89 Does the ball touch the player's hand/arm directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close?

90 Does the ball touch the player's hand/arm when a player falls and the hand/arm is between the body and the ground to support the body, but not extended laterally or vertically away from the body?

Simulation

- 91 Is there contact between the players involved?
- 92 Does the attacker use the slight contact to deceive the referee?
- 93 Has the attacker initiated the contact between the opponent and themselves?
- 94 Is there fair/normal contact between the players, resulting in no offence being committed?
- 95 Has the attacker anticipated the contact between the opponent and themselves?
- 96 Does the attacker initiate the contact?
- 97 Has the player over-exaggerated the seriousness of the foul committed?
- 98 Does the player simulate a foul to win a free kick?
- 99 Does the player attempt to deceive the referee?
- 100 Does the player create a wrong/false impression to gain an unfair advantage?

Confrontation

- 101 Have the original or initial offenders been punished appropriately?
- 102 Were the actions of the players involved excessive with regard to physical contact?
- 103 Did the player(s) become involved unnecessarily by running from some distance?
- 104 Are the ARs effective in helping to prevent further confrontation between players?
- 105 Does the referee get "too close" to the incident and become caught up in the confrontation?
- 106 Does the referee remain calm when dealing with the confrontation?
- 107 Does the referee touch or push the players?
- 108 Does the referee try to separate the first players at the beginning of the confrontation?
- 109 Does the fourth official act appropriately?

- 110 Should any of the match officials make physical contact with players or members in the technical area?
- 111 Was at least one player from each team involved in the confrontation identified and punished appropriately?

Management of Restart

- 121 Do the match officials manage the restart of play effectively?
- 122 Does the referee indicate to the kicker to wait for a signal to restart play?
- 123 Does the referee succeed in ensuring that the defensive wall retreats 9.15m and remains so?
- 124 How far away are the defensive players when the free kick is taken?
- 125 Does the referee take up the most advantageous position for the restart?
- 126 Is the ball placement acceptable?
- 127 Does the player prevent a quick restart?
- 128 Does the player provoke a confrontation by deliberately touching the ball after the referee had stopped play?
- 129 Does the player appear to take a restart but suddenly leave it to one of the teammates to take it?
- 130 Does the referee indicate or acknowledge the restart of the match after it has been stopped?
- 131 Were disciplinary sanctions correctly applied?
- 132 Should the referee allow a 'quick' free kick in this situation?
- 133 Is the ball intercepted by an opponent who is less than 9.15m (10 yards) from the ball?
- 134 Does the player distract or impede the thrower by moving closer than 2m (2 yards) where the throw-in is to be taken?
- 135 Is the use of vanishing spray effective in controlling 9.15m (10 yards) distance?
- 136 Does the player enter the field of play without the referee's permission and interfere with play?

- 137 Where three or more defending team's players form a "wall", do the attacking team's players remain at least 1 m from the "wall"?
- 138 At a goal kick, is an opponent inside the penalty area challenging for the ball before it is in play?

Advantage

- 141 Is there a team benefit if the referee applies the advantage?
- 142 Did the fouled player still have possession of the ball after the foul was committed?
- 143 Is there more of a benefit in applying advantage or awarding a free kick?
- 144 Does the foul committed deserve a yellow card?
- 145 Does the foul committed deserve a red card?
- 146 Is the foul committed near the penalty area?
- 147 Does the fouled player have space to progress?
- 148 Are there teammates in a good position to pass the ball to?
- 149 After advantage has been applied, should the referee return to administer a disciplinary sanction?
- 150 After application of the advantage, does the offending player play the ball or challenge/interfere with an opponent?
- 151 Where on the field of play did the offence occur?
- 152 Should the tempo/temperature of the match be considered?
- 153 If the player who committed the first offence had previously been cautioned, would it have been advisable to allow play to continue?
- 154 Is there a chance of an immediate attack?
- 155 Could the referee adopt a "wait and see" approach by delaying the whistle?
- 156 Does the referee give a clear signal to allow play to continue when the offence occurred?

Dissent

- 161 Does the player show dissent by protesting verbally (by words)?
- 162 Does the player show dissent by protesting non-verbally (by action)?
- 163 Does the player act in a manner that shows a lack of respect for the game?
- 164 Could dissent have been avoided if the referee or AR had intervened quicker?
- 165 Does the referee support his/her colleague following a reaction by a player to a decision made by an AR?
- 166 Is the correct disciplinary sanction (yellow or red card) applied?
- 167 Does the referee correctly differentiate between frustration and dissent?
- 168 Does the captain of the team show dissent by protesting?
- 169 Does the player influence the referee to get an opposing player cautioned by waving an "imaginary card"?
- 170 Does the player spit on the ground to display anger at and disagreement with the decisions of the match officials, etc.?

Body language

- 171 Does the referee show signs of uncertainty?
- 172 Does the referee's body language show confidence or alertness?
- 173 Is the referee's reaction slow after the incident?
- 174 Have the referee's actions inflamed the situation?
- 175 Does the referee remain calm and in control?
- 176 Has the referee been influenced into taking disciplinary action?
- 177 Does the referee use the whistle appropriately?
- 178 Does the referee use the cards appropriately?
- 179 Does the referee make the signals according to the guidelines for referees?
- 180 Does the referee make the message clear to the player(s) involved?

- 181 Does the referee raise his/her profile appropriately in more demanding situations?
- 182 Should the referee remain “neutral” and not make movements as though he is going to issue a disciplinary sanction?

Concentration / awareness

- 191 Is the referee aware of a possible conflict in allowing the game to continue?
- 192 Is there immediate communication between the match officials to avoid unnecessary protests or appeals?
- 193 Does the referee keep his/her focus and concentration throughout the incident?
- 194 Is the referee in a good position to make the correct decision?
- 195 Is the communication process appropriate in deciding who the offending player is?
- 196 Why is the disciplinary sanction shown to the wrong player?
- 197 Is the referee aware of what the Law allows in certain situations?
- 198 Is the player guilty of persistently infringing the Laws of the Game?
- 199 Is the referee aware of the tactical play of a team that breaks up play or targets individual opponents?
- 200 Does the referee protect (a) player(s) from potential serious injury?

Teamwork

- 221 Is the AR or AAR closer to the action than the referee?
- 222 Does the AR or AAR have a better view of the incident than the referee?
- 223 Does the referee have a better view of the incident than the AR or AAR?
- 224 Is the signal from the AR to the referee clear?
- 225 Did the referee make a decision before the signal by the AR?
- 226 Does the incident happen out of the view of the referee?

- 227 Does the AR or AAR inform the referee about any misconduct?
- 228 Should one of the match officials have seen the incident?
- 229 Should the fourth official intervene, if none of the other officials had seen the incident?
- 230 Has teamwork broken down because of a lack of concentration?
- 231 Does the AR or AAR inform the referee about any misconduct?
- 232 Should the AAR intervene if none of the other officials had seen the incident?
- 233 Should the referee be aware of “upper body” or contact with the hands/arms when the AR is focused on the ball being in or out of play?

Offside

- 241 Is the AR in a good position to judge offside?
- 242 Is the player in an offside position? If so, which part of the body?
- 243 Is the player in an offside position interfering with play by touching the ball?
- 244 Is the player in an offside position interfering with the goalkeeper? If so, how?
- 245 Is the player in an offside position interfering with an opponent? If so, how?
- 246 Does the player in an offside position gain an advantage by playing the ball?
- 247 Does the player in an offside position gain an advantage by interfering with an opponent?
- 248 Will the ball go to a player who was previously in an offside position after a rebound/deflect from an opponent?
- 249 Does the player in an offside position receive the ball after a deliberate save?
- 250 Does the player in an offside position receive the ball after a deliberate pass?
- 251 Does the assistant referee adopt the “wait and see” technique?
- 252 Is any other teammate who has a chance to play the ball in an onside position?

- 253 Does the player in an offside position challenge the opponent for the ball?
- 254 Does the AR give the benefit to the attacking player when the defender and attacker are in line?
- 255 Could the field markings help the AR to make a correct decision?
- 256 Does the referee identify the player who last touches the ball?
- 257 Is the offence (by the attacker/defender) committed before or after the attacker commits an offside offence?

Miscellaneous

- 261 Is the foul committed inside or outside the penalty area?
- 262 Is the foul committed inside or outside the field of play?
- 263 Was the ball in play when the offence was committed?
- 264 Does the player enter or re-enter the field of play without the referee's permission?
- 265 Does the ball enter the goal?
- 266 Does the player kick the ball deliberately to his/her own goalkeeper?
- 267 Does the goalkeeper deliberately handle the ball?
- 268 Did the referee need to stop play in this situation?
- 269 Does the player prevent the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from the hands?
- 270 Did the player(s) deliberately delay the restart unnecessarily?
- 271 Is this violent conduct or merely unsporting behaviour?
- 272 Should the referee consider suspending or abandoning the match?
- 273 Does the player impede the progress of an opponent without any contact being made?
- 274 Does the player kick or attempt to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing the ball?
- 275 Did a dropped ball enter the goal without touching at least two players?
- 276 Is the ball kicked and clearly moves?

- 277 Does the player use a deliberate trick to pass the ball to his/her own goalkeeper in order to circumvent the Law?
- 278 Does the player commit two cautionable offences even in a close proximity?
- 279 Does the player commit a cautionable offence and a sending-off offence in a close proximity?
- 280 Does the goalkeeper handle the ball inside his/her penalty area when not permitted to do so and stopping a promising attack or denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity?
- 281 Does the goalkeeper handle the ball when he/she has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a team-mate?
- 282 Does the holding start from outside the penalty area and continue inside?
- 283 Does the player impede the progress of an opponent with contact?
- 284 Does the player impede the progress of an opponent with the hands?

Management of Penalty Kicks

- 285 Was the goalkeeper of the kicker in the correct position during kicks from the penalty mark?
- 286 Do(es) the attacking player(s) fail to remain 9.15m before the penalty kick is being taken?
- 287 Do(es) the defending player(s) fail to remain 9.15m before the penalty kick is being taken?
- 288 Does the referee need to order the penalty kick to be retaken?
- 289 Does the goalkeeper gain an unfair advantage by moving forward before the kick is being taken?
- 290 Does the kicker play the ball a second time before another player touches the ball?
- 291 Does the goalkeeper deliberately attempt to delay the taking of the penalty kick by acting in an unsporting manner?

- 292 Did the referee ensure the re-taken penalty kick was carried out in accordance with the Law?
- 293 Was the penalty kick taken correctly and in accordance with the Law?
- 294 Was the kick from the penalty mark completed?
- 295 Was the penalty kick taken by a teammate of the identified kicker?
- 296 Does the kicker feint to kick the ball after completing the run-up?
- 297 Does the kicker feint in the run-up?
- 298 Is the defending goalkeeper touching the goalposts, crossbar or goal net before the ball has been kicked?
- 299 Does the defending goalkeeper have at least part of one foot touching, or in line with, the goal line?

Injuries

- 301 Should the referee need to stop the game earlier?
- 302 Was the Law correctly applied to the injured players before play was restarted?
- 303 Does the referee need to give an early signal for the stretcher?
- 304 Did the treatment of the injured player(s) take too long?
- 305 Does the player exaggerate the injury to get an opponent cautioned or to deceive the referee?
- 306 Does the fourth official check the player before allowing him/her to re-enter?
- 307 Does the referee play the correct amount of "additional time"?
- 308 Was the injury assessed before calling for the stretcher?
- 309 Did the player avoid possible contact to prevent injury to themselves?
- 310 Are the playing conditions dangerous and a threat to players' safety?
- 311 Was the treatment on the field of play completed quickly? (in case an exception to leave the field of play)

The Other Match Officials

- 321 Does the AR raise the flag in the correct hand?
- 322 Does the AR's flag technique confuse the referee?
- 323 Does the AR change hands before the flag is raised?
- 324 Is the AR's signal correct given the infringement that has been committed?
- 325 What else could the AR have done to get the attention of the referee?
- 326 Does the AR's intervention change the original decision of the referee?
- 327 Does the AR make eye contact with the referee before signalling?
- 328 Does the AAR make the correct judgement?
- 329 Is the AR or AAR positioned adequately to decide whether the ball has crossed over the goal line?
- 330 Is the AAR correctly positioned during the incident?

Players' Equipment

- 341 Is it permissible to wear undershorts of a different colour to the main shorts?
- 342 Are players allowed to play without shin guards?
- 343 Should a goalkeeper wear colours that distinguish him/her from the other players and match officials?
- 344 Did the player wait until there is a stoppage in play before returning to the field of play?
- 345 Is a player allowed to continue playing with blood on the shirt?
- 346 Do the colours of the basic compulsory equipment distinguish the player from the opponents?
- 347 Do the colours of the basic equipment distinguish the player from the opponents?
- 348 Do the stockings entirely cover the shin guards?

- 349 Do the shin guards provide a reasonable degree of protection?
- 350 Is a player permitted to wear jewellery?
- 351 Is a player allowed to wear tape to cover jewellery?
- 352 Can a player play the ball without a boot on?
- 353 Does play need to be stopped for a player to adjust his/her equipment?

Positioning & Movement

- 361 Is the referee too close to the incident?
- 362 Is the referee too far away to make a credible decision?
- 363 Is the referee's view obscured by (a) player(s)?
- 364 Does the referee create a good viewing angle in order to get the correct decision?
- 365 Is the AR better placed than the referee?
- 366 Are both the referee and the AR in good viewing positions?
- 367 Does the referee's position give him/her a good viewing angle?
- 368 Does the AR's position give him/her a good viewing angle?
- 369 Does the referee anticipate play and show good acceleration and speed?
- 370 Does the referee ensure to keep play between him/her and his or her assistant?
- 371 Is the referee's position close enough for controlling the further development of the situation?
- 372 Is the lead AR within the referee's field of vision?
- 373 Does the referee have a good angle of vision?
- 374 Was the referee in a good position to make the correct decision?
- 375 Does the referee's position interfere with play?
- 376 Does the referee anticipate play and adjust his/her position?

Celebration of a Goal

- 381 Did the celebration result in excessive time wasting?
- 382 Did the player make a gesture which was provocative?
- 383 Did the goal scorer climb onto the perimeter fencing to celebrate?
- 384 Did the player remove his/her shirt whilst celebrating?
- 385 Did the player cover his/her head with the shirt when celebrating?
- 386 Did the player use a mask to cover the head or face?
- 387 Did the player leave the field of play to celebrate?
- 388 Did the referee act in a preventative manner and exercise common sense?
- 389 Did the player jump into or go amongst the spectators to celebrate?
- 390 Did the goalscorer display a message on a under shirt or any other part of the equipment?
- 391 Were the goalscorer's actions excessive and creating safety concerns for the spectators?
- 392 Does the player approach the spectators in a manner which may cause safety and/or security issues?
- 393 Should the player be cautioned for the excessive celebration of a goal and the goal has been cancelled?

Delaying Restart of Play

- 401 Does the player delay the goalkeeper from distributing the ball into play?
- 402 Does the player provoke the referee into deliberately receiving a caution?
- 403 Should the referee consider if the player heard the whistle and clearly tried to delay the restart of play?
- 404 Did the player delay the restart of play by deliberately kicking the ball away?
- 405 Does the goalkeeper delay the restart of play, if so, how?
- 406 Does the injured player use/extend the delay unfairly for a tactical reason?

Advantage

Courtesy of Jim Ouliaris (FFA Instructor)
from FFA Education Material 2015

The referees' responsibility

From Law 5 – 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."*

"3. Powers and Duties

The Referee: 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"

If a team has possession of the ball, it does not always constitute an advantage!

Factors to consider when applying advantage

- Severity of the offence
- Chances of an immediate, promising attack
- Location on the field
- Control of the ball
- Direction of play
- Location and number of defenders vs attackers
- Injury management
- Atmosphere or temperature of the match
- Skill level
- State of the match
- Condition of the field
- Referee's control

All the factors play an important part when considering playing an advantage. Ultimately, it is down to the referee's control on whether the referee applies the advantage clause or not.



= ADVANTAGE

POPP

Possession

- active and credible control by the player fouled or by a team mate
- without possession, none of the other POP's matter

Opportunity

- probability of a continuing and immediate attack or an attempt on goal

Players

- number and skill of attackers versus the number and skill of defenders

Proximity

- distance from goal (traffic lights)

All advantage decisions are at the discretion of the referee, based solely on his or her judgment as to the specific circumstances of each individual offence. Most of the time, an advantage decision cannot be second-guessed because to do so would require knowing what would have happened in the absence of the decision. Either giving it or not giving it could be effective but it can seldom be described as "wrong".

As a consequence, it is almost impossible to put together a brief scenario and then expect anyone, no matter how experienced or expert, to definitively state that an advantage decision would be right or wrong – the number and complexity of the factors going into making the decision are too great to allow this.

Location

Courtesy of FIFA Teaching Materials 2013

Location of the offence will always play a part in whether advantage should be played or not. It is recommended that when the offence occurs in the **red zone**, extra precaution should be applied – only in exceptional situations should this be considered. In the **orange zone**, careful consideration should be adopted, taking into account all possible factors which might affect match control. In the **green zone**, advantage should be applied where possible but a free kick might also be a team benefit.



The FIFA considerations for advantage are on page 133.

Stopping a Promising Attack (SPA)

In order to caution a player for SPA you need to consider the following:

Direction	What is the direction of play?
Distance	What is the distance between the offence and the goal?
Defenders	The location and number of defenders . The less number of defenders and the further away they are, the more promising the attack.
Control	The likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball. When considering SPA we look at control to attack as opposed to DOGSO where we look at control to shoot.
Attackers	The location and number of attackers . The more attackers there are and the more promising their position, the more promising the attack.
Passing options	How many options to pass the ball did the player have when he was fouled? Whose favour is the next phase of play in?

Not all of these must be met for SPA to be considered and given. A player who commits a foul which interferes with or stops a promising attack does not need to be cautioned if the referee awards a penalty kick for an offence which was an attempt to play the ball.

Refer to page 59 for details stopping a promising attack (Law 12). The FIFA considerations for stopping a promising attack are on page 130.

Denying an Obvious Goal-scoring Opportunity (DOGSO)

To deny a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, **all four** of the following **must** be met:

Direction	The general direction of play (the overall movement is towards the offender's goal)
Distance	The distance between the offence and the goal
Defenders	The location and number of defenders
Control	The likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball



If a penalty kick is awarded, a player is cautioned if the offence that denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity is an attempt to play 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.

Refer to page 60 for details on denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (Law 12). The FIFA considerations for denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity are on page 131.

Managing Defensive Walls

Introduction

Referees are encouraged to minimise stoppages and to keep the match moving. This has seen referees correctly allowing free kicks to be taken quickly even if it is not placed on the exact blade of grass.

When there is no chance of a goal being scored direct from the free kick this approach is both sensible and rational. But it does not always work around the penalty area.

The “ceremonial free kick”

A free kick to the attacking side near the penalty area will generally be taken as a shot on goal. This results in what is often called a ‘ceremonial free kick’. The ball is placed, the wall is set up and following a signal from the referee the free kick is taken.

Whilst this is the most common case referees should be prepared to allow the attacking team to take a quick free kick should they wish to do so. How can referees best handle the ceremonial free kick? There are several factors and steps that need to be considered. An established and logical routine will assist.

Managing Defensive Walls

1. Place the ball

For a ceremonial free kick the ball should be placed where the offence occurred. Move to this spot and have the ball put on the ground.

2. Show the whistle

Hold up your whistle so the attacking players can see it and tell them not to take the kick until the whistle is blown.

3. Move to the wall

When the attackers clearly acknowledge that the kick cannot be taken until the whistle is blown, move either sideways or backwards maintaining a view of the ball. Do not walk away with your back to the ball as an attacker may move the ball away from the correct spot.

4. Deal with the nearest problem

Often referees will keep moving to where most of the defenders are, walking past other defenders nearer to the ball. Deal with the closest players first and have them come back with you to the 9.15m.

5. Establish the 9.15 metres

Move to where you want the wall. Use your voice and presence to bring the wall back as you move. Avoid using your whistle as it may be mistaken for the restart signal.

6. Once the wall is placed

Move out to one side, slightly in front of the wall but where you can still be seen by the players in the wall. Referees need to be aware of attackers pushing, charging or holding in the wall.

7. Blow the whistle

When all is in readiness and players are settled whistle to restart the match.

8. As the kick is taken

Move towards the goal line and into the next phase of play. This will put you in a place where you can clearly see what happens. If the attack breaks down just move to monitor the next zone of play.

Match Control and Player Management

Basic role of the referee

The primary role of the referee is to control the match using a combination of skills including knowledge and interpretation of the Laws, personality, techniques and concepts.

Law implementation and confidence

What is the combination of factors that will deliver control to the referee? You cannot really be a good referee if you don't know how to apply the Laws. However, good decisions themselves do not guarantee control. Control comes from the confidence that the players have in referees. This privilege is earned rather than automatically granted. It is recognition by the players that referees will not allow things to get out of hand; that they know what they are doing and that they deserve their place on the field.

Positioning

One of the major areas in control is positioning. The referee has to be in a good position to make a good decision. Positioning allows them to see what actually happens. Good positioning is about movement and anticipation. It is a conscious and physical act by referees to decide where they will move to improve their view of what is happening. You are reminded that the major principle of good positioning requires the referee achieve an **angled view through** the point of contact between competing players. In most situations the referee should be to the **left** of the ball. Referees who adopt this style of movement invariably have a lower error rate and consequently a good chance of being seen as an effective manager by players.

Player management

Player management is the implementation of a series of learned techniques during matches to modify the behaviour of the players. It is not just an isolated response to a specific incident. It is also firmly linked to personality.

Effective communication

The referee needs to **talk** to the players, to tell them what is wanted and to convey clearly to the players the consequences of their behaviour. It is a cooperative relationship where referees should be working with players to enable the match to be played fairly and safely. Effective communication is achieved when there is respect between both parties. Referees must show respect towards players and in turn they will be respected. Referees should speak to players politely and firmly without being aggressive, patronising or arrogant.

Consistency

Consistency is applying **all** of the Laws, for **all** of the match, over **all** the field. You are not being consistent if you penalise an offence outside the penalty area but ignore it inside the area – handball is a classic example of this.

You are not being consistent if:

- you caution or penalise a player for an offence late in the match when you have ignored these offences up until now;
- at a free kick you allow opponents to stand over the ball in the middle third, but insist on them retreating 9.15m when the free kick is near the penalty area;
- you allow defenders in their own half to throw the ball in 5m forward of where it went out, but do not allow attackers to do the same thing near their opponent's goal. Similarly the Laws do not say that defenders get additional distance when a foul is committed against them.

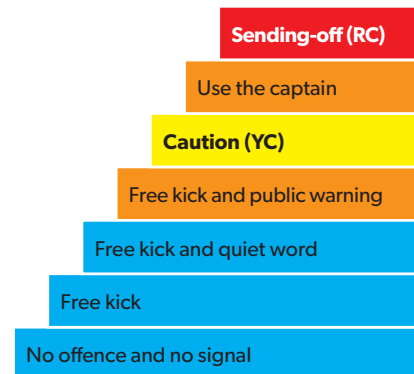
Consistency is about fairness. It's about ensuring that the Laws are applied the same way for all players regardless of their position or ability.

'Steps' Theory

Courtesy of FFA Level 3 Referee training program

Player management is similar to climbing a set of stairs. We use a series of techniques to ensure that players conduct themselves appropriately. These techniques can be viewed as a series of steps.

Consider a set of steps in front of you as being how you manage player behaviour. In most instances you will move one step at a time. Sometimes you may be required to skip one or two steps.



No offence and no signal

If there is no offence then no signal needs to be given nor is advantage played. Avoid calling "Play on".

Free kick

A way of giving the ball back to the team that has been cheated or robbed of the ball. Simply a way of saying 'That was unfair – let's give the ball back to the other player'. A free kick is the first step in trying to get players to return to fair play.

Free kick and quiet word

Gentle, friendly advice – soft voice, with a smile if possible. This is a gentle piece of friendly advice given to a player by a referee delivered unobtrusively. Some examples of a 'quiet word':

"That was too hard. Now calm down or you'll end up in trouble."

"Use your head, he's only trying to get you into strife."

"Come on, you know better than that."

Free kick and public warning

Firm voice, directs the player – for example "If you continue you will be cautioned". The player should be left in no doubt about what will happen next. The referee pulls the player aside and, unlike the quiet word, publicly admonishes them. The voice used by the referee is no longer gentle and friendly. It is now firm and strong. For example:

"Any more tackles like that and you will be cautioned. No ifs, no buts, you will be cautioned."

After a public warning has been issued it should not be used again with the same player – i.e. one public warning per player. However, this does not stop the referee from continuing with the quiet word.

Caution (YC) – yellow card

Strong voice – the players need to understand they are tottering on the edge. The most serious punishment – a sending-off – could be next. This step is often badly handled. In most cases the referee merely holds the yellow card up in the air in the direction of the player. The yellow card means:

You have stepped over the line. You need to change your behaviour dramatically because if you offend again you will be dismissed.

Match Control and Player Management

The caution can be used as a tool to modify player behaviour. The purpose of the card is to **prevent** the player being sent off. If the referee is more assertive in delivering the card, then the player concerned (and all players on the field and the coach) will be convinced that the referee is serious. The referee's voice should be firm, strong, and assertive – but **not** aggressive – when the message is delivered:

'Any more and you're off!'

After the player is publicly warned or cautioned the referee should not speak publicly to that player again. To do so diminishes the previous sanctions. However, this does not stop the referee from continuing with the quiet word.

*Note: Sometimes the first sanction that has to be applied is a public warning or a caution, or even a sending-off. What is important is that the punishment must be equal to the offence. Too soft is just as bad as too hard. The referee's action needs to be seen as appropriate for the offence, that is, it is a **balanced** approach.*

Use the captain

This is a technique that can only be used infrequently. If it is used week in, week out, its impact will simply evaporate. It is a process that uses the captain to assist control. It is a simple two-step process:

1. State the situation – e.g. "Number 7 has already been cautioned."
2. Ask for help – e.g. "Help me help him stay on the field."

Sending-off (RC) – red card

When all else fails the red card is produced and the player is sent from the field of play.

Techniques to minimise pressure and maximise control

Attitude and bearing

You should always try to appear cool, calm and confident. Even when your stomach is churning and an inner voice is screaming 'This is going to explode! They're going to kill each other!' You need to be outwardly calm and unpressured. Be aware that perception can become reality. You should monitor and control body language and the words that you use so that players see and hear a referee in personal control. Stand tall – look the part.

Prior to the kick-off

Stride confidently onto the field, holding the ball, accompanied by your assistants. You are the third team. When you toss the coin, catch it. If you let it drop to the ground you lose your body height when you bend down. Do not ask your assistants if they are ready. Just look to them for a nod that all is well. This subtle but important communication helps say that you are fully in charge and the match will begin when you are ready.

Dissent

Dissent is an insidious disease. Ignoring dissent does not solve problems – it makes them worse. If you do not deal with dissent it creates serious doubts in the minds of players about who really is in charge of the match. Effective match officials do not tolerate dissent in any form. They exert their personalities on the match and simply refuse to accept dissent against them and their colleagues. Immediate and strong action is required.

Whistle, face and arms

Many people claim that the whistle is a referee's primary communication tool. It is important but it is **not** the only tool. Common advice given to referees is that the strength, length and tone of a whistle blast should reflect an offences' seriousness. To a significant degree this is true. A minor foul attracts a short and clear but not intense blast while a serious foul gets a long, hard and

very intense blast. However, communication by referees is heavily dependent on their personalities. It is substantially driven by a combination of use of your voice, body language and whistle usage.

Convincing decisions occur when all these elements are in harmony. Therefore not only does the whistle indicate the referee's response, but the face should mirror the same message. i.e. a bad foul produces a cranky face; and so on. The use of the arm contributes to some problems. Traditionally it is lifted up and straight out from the side of the body to give the directional signal. However, it does not always 'sell' the decision. To do this the arm should be raised from the side of the body and out very firmly from shoulder height. This enables the referee to use a degree of 'snap' that matches the seriousness of the foul **and** mirror the whistles' message. Little foul = little 'snap', medium foul = medium 'snap', big foul = strongest 'snap'.

Using your hands

Remember – what we want are referees who are firmly in control and fully in charge. Some referees use a waist height, two hands/ palms down, up and down movement to ask players to calm down. The referee is **asking** players to calm down and is trying to placate the players rather than **directing** them to calm down. A far more effective signal is the 'stop' signal, with a full palm directed at the player(s). This is stronger and says that the referee is in charge, is not offering a choice and requires the players to calm down.

Similarly when the referee has to admonish, caution or expel a player, the 'stop' signal creates space between the referee and the player. Space is important, provides a safer environment and prevents unnecessary eyeball to eyeball confrontation.

Using your voice

Sarcastic, rude and flippant remarks to players should be avoided. Comments should be carefully phrased and always be delivered clearly, calmly and firmly. For example, if a player appeals for a foul the

best response is a simple but firm “No”. Referees should also think about how the advantage-granted call is delivered. Be calm and call out firmly “Play on.”

Using your presence

The closeness of the referee to an incident helps convince players that the referee’s decision is correct. This is an example of the impact of ‘presence’ on a match. A decision made 50m from the incident is not seen as being convincing. Smart referees move quickly towards players involved in an incident, particularly if a body contact foul has occurred. The referee’s physical presence can prevent an escalation of problems. However, charging in on every foul can add to the pressure rather than help it.

There are also times when referees can prevent problems simply by moving away. When the referee wishes to warn or formally caution a player the following procedure is recommended:

- get eye contact with the player;
- use your hands/full palms ‘stop’ signal;
- create space from the player;
- say when warning a player: “Any more and you will be cautioned. Your actions are your responsibility.” (or “sent off” depending on the circumstances);
- walk away with purpose and determination.

Moving away indicates that the decision is final and that debate is not possible. It can also minimise protests and reduces the possibility of a second caution and a subsequent sending-off.

*Please note the words used above – they should convey to the player that if there is any more of this type of behaviour it is the **player’s own actions** that will result in further punishment. Not might ... but will! By avoiding the use of ‘I’ the referee has placed responsibility squarely on the player. However, a referee who does not carry through with announced actions will severely undermine any authority and control that they may have been established.*

Using the cards

Following an incident, players often look to you to try to judge what actions are about to be taken. It can be useful to send a rapid message that you are in control and intend to take action. In this situation take the card out of your pocket, hold it by your side in clear view, and run towards the offending player(s). This firm and determined action can calm down players thinking of getting involved and may prevent retaliation. At other times it may be best to isolate the offender by drawing the player away from their team mates into your zone of influence. This may create a calming effect and cool down hotheads. The time taken also acts as a tension breaker – see below.

Using time

The ability to slow down the match and consume a little time for feelings to abate is a well-established technique. By deliberately delaying a restart you provide time for tensions to dissipate and the pressures to decline. You could decide to do one or all of the following: draw a player aside, talk to the player (not debate) or spend time recording details.

Showing concern

Speaking to players who have been fouled can be smart refereeing. All you have to do is say something like ‘Don’t worry I’ll look after the problem’. Similarly, when a player who has left the field to have an injury treated returns to play, the skilled referee will ask with a genuine and concerned smile ‘Are you okay?’ Players generally do appreciate a sincere enquiry – it says the referee is interested and supportive.

Smiling

In the final analysis football is a game. It should be associated with the concepts of fun and enjoyment. Football is meant to be fun and we should have fun as we referee. It’s very difficult to argue with a smile. A referee who walks around with a sour looking face is as bad as a referee who grins inanely throughout a match. Referees should not take themselves too seriously. Sure, they have very important roles to perform but they need to implement their roles as **part** of a match, not a battle between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

Guidance for Assistant Referees

The following guidelines supplements information provided by FIFA in this publication.

Relationships between referees and their assistants

Relationships should be based on trust and mutual respect. These conditions are essential if the officiating team is to operate at an optimum level. Referees must accept that they are charged with the responsibility of controlling matches. They should accept this key responsibility, make decisions, and not force or allow their assistants to make the critical decisions. Assistants offer opinions and assist the referee they do not direct or command. If the referee has seen an incident assistants should only intervene in extreme circumstances.

This principle extends to all decisions including offside. A referee should not automatically accept an assistant's signal, and must be prepared to decline that advice if considered appropriate to do so. Being an effective assistant is a multi-skilled and complex task. It demands total concentration throughout the match. Whether the ball is in or out of play, close to the assistant or distant, the assistant must concentrate fully. Assistants are not spectators at a match; they have important roles to fulfill.

General positioning and movement patterns

These guidelines assume that the assistants are running the FIFA standard 'right wings'.

Always in line

Assistants should always be in line with the second last defender or the ball whichever is closest to the goal line. This will help ensure that they are in the best position to make correct decisions.

Movement and angle

Assistants should spend as much time as possible facing the field. The recommended movement pattern is sideways along and parallel to the touchline, facing the field of play, and in line with the second last defender. The position is adjusted in response to the movement of the players

by moving sideways left and right along the touchline. Walking along the line is neither professional nor efficient. It conveys a lack of interest and commitment to the role.

When play speeds up good assistants turn and run, with the left shoulder at ninety degrees to the touchline and with the head turned to look along the shoulder. This ensures that the body forms a right angle to play.

Two common problems can arise when assistants are moving sideways. The first problem is the head. When moving sideways, the assistant's head should be facing directly into the field, lined up on the second last defender. In general the defender is fairly static compared to the ball, so the assistant's eyes should flick rapidly between the defender and the moving ball. This action might cause the head to turn slightly towards the left. If this happens assistants may find that they are now closer to the goal line than the second last defender, therefore out of line, and need to adjust their position. Feet create the second problem. If one foot is closer to the touchline than the other the body may mirror the same angle. Similarly, if one foot swings out more than the other foot the body may not be parallel to the touchline, the head will not be centred and therefore the assistant will be out of line.

To overcome these problems assistant referees should regularly drop their chin to the chest. If the chin does not hit the middle of the chest then the head has turned and they will be out of line. They should then look at their feet. If their feet are not at the same angle, or the toes are not parallel, they would likely be out of line. If assistant referees fail to ensure that they are positioned at a right angle to play they cannot guarantee that their decisions will be correct. An optimum position gives the best chance of getting decisions correct.

Half-way

When the match is in the other half of the field, assistants should still be aware of images they are creating. Lounging around watching play does not convey an image of involvement or interest in the match. Regardless of where the ball is assistants should be concentrating 100% on their duties and roles. If the second last defender moves into the opponent's half do not follow the player. Remain at halfway and pick-up the second last defender when that player crosses back into their half of the field.

Penalty kick

At the taking of a penalty kick during normal play the assistant should be standing at the junction of the goal line and the penalty area line. When kicks from the penalty mark are used to determine the winner of a match the assistant should stand at the junction of the goal line and the goal area line.

Signals and communication

Techniques that enhance the assistant's performance and communications with the referee.

Using the eyes

The key to effective co-operation between referees and assistants is eye contact. Only by looking at the referee and being aware of the referee's position can an assistant decide if intervention is necessary. Assistants should never interfere in the referee's running of a match. They should only draw the referee's attention to incidents that the referee could not see clearly. If a foul occurs, but the referee does not react (e.g. does not award a free kick, does not 'chat' a player, etc.), check the referee's position. Do not signal if the referee had a clear view of the incident. If the referee's view was blocked, flag to advise that an offence has occurred.

Attempt to make eye contact with the referee before raising your flag. This technique can clarify whether or not the referee is seeking assistance. It also minimises the risk of conflicting signals being given. The principle is simple **confer then decide**.

The flag

The flag represents an assistant's secondary communication tool (the major tool being eye contact with the referee). The flag must always be in clear view of the referee and therefore is carried against the side of the body closest to the referee. It should always be unfurled, not held against the pole. When running, the arm carrying the flag should remain pointed at the ground and be kept steady. If the referee sees the flag being pumped up and down the movement may be mistaken for a signal. Believing that an offence is being signalled, the referee may stop play. If a change of flag direction is needed make the change by lowering the flag below the waist, cross it in front of the body and change hands and then raise it in the other hand.

When the flag is raised above the head to indicate a foul it may be waved from side-to-side, but not too vigorously. Remember it is the assistant's task to signal by raising the flag – it is the referee's responsibility to interpret the signal and decide how to respond.

Your image and presentation

When giving any signal stop running, stand at attention and give the signal with your body facing the field. When indicating direction your arm should be about 45 degrees above the horizontal. The arm and flag should appear to be one continuous straight line. This is achieved by locking your wrist and pressing your thumb firmly down on the handle. Always stand up straight never bend over or crouch when concentrating on play. This lowers your body height and impacts your body image.

Offside

Assistants should maintain a constant position in line with the second last defender or the ball (whichever is closest to the goal line). Hold your flag up until the referee stops play then point to the position of the ball – far side, centre field or near to you – until the ball is placed correctly. The referee may decline your advice or not see it. Do not stay standing with the flag up if the defending team gains possession of the ball and the play has moved well away from the attacking zone.

Penalty kick

If you spot an offence in the penalty area that should result in a penalty kick being awarded first check the referee's position. If the referee seems to be unsighted or clearly looking for assistance raise your flag in your right hand until sighted by the referee then lower the flag and move rapidly towards the corner flag.

At the taking of a penalty kick during normal play an assistant may flag if the goalkeeper moves forward of the goal line before the ball is in play. The referee may amend this in the pre-match instructions. When kicks from the penalty mark are used to determine the winner of a match, one assistant acts as a goal judge and the other manages the players waiting in the centre circle.

Throw-ins

As an assistant you should **assist** by telling and/or showing players where they should be positioned for a throw-in when it is near them. This approach may prevent an additional stoppage in the match for a throw-in being taken from the wrong position. If for some reason a player starts to walk past the 'mark' then the assistant or referee (whoever is closer) tells that player to stop and take the throw-in from there. When you get what you want say: 'Thank you!' – and smile.

Similarly you can enhance the match and assist the players and referee by reminding opponents close by (when appropriate) that they may not be closer than 2 metres to the thrower. When the ball goes out in your half of the field make eye contact with the referee and indicate which team should take the throw-in using a one part signal. If not sure which team is entitled to the throw-in raise the flag above the head. This tells the referee that the ball is out but that you are unsure which team has the throw-in. Raising the flag to indicate the ball is out of play before signalling the direction (a two part signal) should not be used unless the decision is a 'close call' and the referee is not looking at you.

Throw-ins in the other half of the field are essentially the responsibility of the referee who is likely to be closer to the ball. However, you should still assist the referee by signalling when the ball goes out of play. If you are certain you know which team has the throw-in, and you have eye contact with the referee, use the one part signal to point down the line indicating ball out and direction.

Corner kick

Stand behind the corner flag when a corner kick is being taken on your side. Should the corner flag block your view you can stand slightly to the side of the flag. When the kick is being taken from your side of the field ensure that the ball is correctly placed and that defenders are at least 9.15m from the ball. There is no need for any special signal to the referee that all is in order. If you are standing still behind the corner flag it should be obvious to the referee that there are no problems. For corner kicks from the far side the correct placement of the ball and the enforcement of the 9.15m is the responsibility of the referee.

Where the ball from a corner kick is going to swing in towards the goals – i.e. the corner kick taker uses their left foot from the right hand side of the field or their right foot from the left hand side – the assistant referee must take up a position in line with the second last defender, even if the second last defender is not positioned on the goal line. This is because there is little risk that the ball will go out of play and curve back into play in this scenario and the assistant referee is better positioned to make offside decisions.

Record keeping

Keep a complete record of all key match events (goals, substitutions, cautions, sending-offs, etc.) plus the time that each event occurred. This may prevent arguments over whether the same player has been cautioned twice, the number of substitutions made, goal scorers, and so on. Match officials should compare and check their records at half time and full time.

Not offside or ball not out of play

The principle is simple – if nothing has happened there is nothing to signal. If there is no offside no signal is needed. Similarly if the ball is near the touchline or goal line but still in play no signal is needed until the ball goes out of play.

Incidents behind the referees' back

Assistants have to be alert to player misconduct that occurs behind the referee's back. The key to success is to keep an eye on any area where players from opposing teams are close together. As a general rule if an offence occurs that requires action by the referee, wait until the referee is facing you before raising your flag. When the referee has stopped play, beckon the referee to you and report to the referee what you have seen and/or heard. It is not the assistant's role to insist what action the referee should take – just simply report what has happened. However, if the referee requests a recommendation on an appropriate response you may offer an opinion.

In cases of serious breaches of the Laws one or both assistants may choose to flag even though the referee's back is turned. This is appropriate if it is believed that this may prevent further problems. If only one assistant has flagged it will alert the other assistant who may then flag if the referee is looking in that direction. Both assistants must be aware of each other's actions for this system to be effective. This cooperation also applies when the assistant nearest the technical area signals that a substitution is required, but the referee is facing away from that assistant and cannot see the signal. The other assistant should assist by also signalling for a substitution. Attentive assistants are likely to enhance each other's roles and the match as a whole.

Zone of play

As a general rule assistants should indicate offences that have occurred in their own zone of play. However, should a major violation occur the assistant must draw the referee's attention to it even if the incident occurs on the far side of the field. This is required under Law 6. Before signalling consider and rapidly answer these questions:

- *Was the referee able to see what happened?*
- *If I signal for the offence will I be assisting or interfering?*

At half time and full time

When the referee whistles for half time and full time both assistants should sprint to the referee so the three officials can leave the field as a team. Do not stroll across the field or wait for the referee to reach you – move quickly to the side of the referee.

During stoppages

When play is stopped by the referee for an injured player or for a substitution, the appropriate assistant should stand opposite where the play should restart. This will help the referee recommence the match from the correct position. It may even be necessary to move down the line a little way past half way into the other half.

Officials Log

Introduction

FFA's training programs for referees, assessors and instructors are registered under the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) National Officiating Accreditation Scheme (NOAS). The following information is taken from the Australian Officiating Development Scheduled (AODS) and that document should be referred to for additional information. The AODS is available from the refereeing section of the FFA website under Get Involved – Refereeing: www.ffa.com.au

Activities to revalidate qualification

The following table outlines the activities that are required to be undertaken to be eligible to revalidate the qualification and should be recorded using the Officials Log in this publication.

Qualification	Active officiating (per year)	Attend formal coaching sessions	Pass LOTG exam	Other Requirements
Level 4 Referee	4 matches	(per year)	Not required	
Level 3 Futsal Referee	6 matches	1 time	Yes – 70%	Not required
Level 3 Referee	6 matches	1 time	Yes – 70%	Pass 1 match assessment during final year of qualification
Level 2 Referee	8 matches	1 time	Yes – 80%	
Level 1 Referee	10 matches	4 times	Yes – 85%	
Level 3 Assessor	4 matches	4 times	Yes – 70%	Review of 1 match report during each year of qualification
Level 2 Assessor*	6 matches	4 times	Yes – 80%	
Level 1 Assessor*	8 matches	4 times	Yes – 85%	
Level 3 Instructor	1 day of course instruction	4 times		Maintain an active Assessor qualification
Level 2 Instructor	2 days of course instruction	3 times	Yes – 85%	

*Assessors must undertake the Level 1 and 2 Assessor Refresher training program.

Below are some guidelines regarding each component of the specified activities:

Active officiating

The hours reflect the nominal hours for each year in which you are active as a match official.

Referee	Actively officiate in competition matches. This can include being an assistant referee but not a fourth official.
Assessor	Actively assessing in competition matches (or other matches approved by FFA).
Instructor	The time spent on presenting units in FFA-approved training programs. These units can be conducted over multiple training programs. The units include examinations but not match assessments.

Attend formal coaching sessions

These are coaching sessions that involve tactical and technical education, updates to the Laws of the Game, etc. This also includes any formal pre-season seminar conducted by your referee organisation. However, they do not include fitness training or fitness tests.

Laws of the Game examination

During the last year of a match official's qualification they must be deemed competent in their knowledge of the Laws of the Game by undertaking a FFA-provided examination. This is ideally done as part of the annual pre-season seminar conducted by most referee organisations.

Match assessments

During the course of a qualification we want to ensure that the official is competent to officiate (including assessors) matches. The standard of match must be equivalent to the level of qualification. For example a Level 1 Referee must be deemed competent in a match within their National Premier League or a competition approved by FFA. If a referee is deemed to be not competent at the level of qualification, they may be recommended to have an alternate level of qualification granted that equates to the level of competition in which they are competent to officiate.

Using the log

The log is an essential tool in the process to revalidate qualification. Officials should record their activities. Summarise matches officiated instead of listing every single match unless they were of significance (e.g. finals series matches, cup finals, national competition or national tournament

Date	Activity	Location	Hours	Coordinator (Signature or Stamp)
2020 winter	U16 Boys – 12x referee and 21x AR	Dubbo	45	
2020 winter	Referee U18 grand final	Coffs Harbour	2	
2020 winter	U21 Girls – 10x Ref and 5x AR	Melbourne	27	
2020 summer	Youth – summer series – 20 matches	Brisbane	30	

The log may also provide evidence of experience gained should an application for recognition of prior learning (RPL) towards a new qualification be submitted. If you attend an approved updating activity fill in the appropriate details and obtain the signature of the coordinator and/or an official stamp of the organising body.

Officials Log

Date	Activity	Location	Hours	Coordinator (Signature or Stamp)





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