



Law changes 2024/25

Outline summary of Law changes

Law 1 – The Field of Play

- Clarification that the goal line technology (GLT) indication that a goal has been scored can be communicated via the referee's earpiece/headset

Law 3 – The Players

- The use of additional permanent concussion substitutions is now available to competitions
- Each team must have a captain who wears an identifying armband

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment

- Clarification that players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shinguards
- Clarification of the requirements for the captain's compulsory armband
- Reference to gloves to be included under 'Other equipment'
- Reference to tracksuit bottoms for goalkeepers to be removed from 'Compulsory equipment' and included under 'Other equipment'

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Clarification that non-deliberate handball offences for which penalties are awarded are to be sanctioned in the same way as fouls which are an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

- Clarification that part of the ball must touch or overhang the centre of the penalty mark
- Encroachment by players will be penalised only if it has an impact (same philosophy as goalkeeper encroachment)

Other:

Guidelines for temporary dismissals (sin bins)

- The guidelines have been revised, including, most notably, to specify that a temporarily dismissed player can return to the field of play only during a stoppage and to simplify System B



Details of all Law changes

The following are the changes to the Laws of the Game for the 2024/25 edition. For each change, the amended or additional wording is provided together with the previous wording, where appropriate, followed by an explanation of the change.

Key

The main Law changes are underlined in yellow and highlighted in the margin. Editorial changes are underlined.

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

Law 1 – The Field of Play

11. Goal line technology (GLT)

Additional text

Principles of GLT

(...)

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, and/or via the referee's earpiece/headset); it may also be sent to the video operation room (VOR).

Explanation

Clarification that the GLT indication that a goal has been scored can be communicated via the referee's earpiece/headset.

Law 3 – The Players

2. Number of substitutions

Additional text (after the 'Return substitutions' section)

Additional permanent concussion substitutions

Competitions may use additional permanent concussion substitutions in accordance with the protocol listed under 'Notes and modifications'.

Explanation

Competitions now have the option to use additional permanent concussion substitutions. The protocol details are contained in the 'Notes and modifications' section of the Laws of the Game.

Law 3 – The Players

10. Team captain

Additional text

Each team must have a captain on the field of play who wears an identifying armband. The team captain has no special status or privileges but (...)

Explanation

Teams must have a captain who can be easily identified by the referee. Armband details are outlined in Law 4.

Law 4 – The Players’ Equipment

2. Compulsory equipment

Amended text

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

- (...)
- shinguards – these must be made of a suitable material and be of an appropriate size to provide reasonable protection and be covered by the socks. Players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shinguards
- (...)

Explanation

Clarification that players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shinguards. Having provided this information in the definition of ‘shinguard’ in the Glossary, it is now also included in the Laws text.

Law 4 – The Players’ Equipment

2. Compulsory equipment

Additional text

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

- (...)
- footwear

The team captain must wear the armband issued or authorised by the relevant competition organiser, or a single-coloured armband that may also have the word ‘captain’ or the letter ‘C’ or a translation thereof, which should also be a single colour (see also ‘General modifications’).

Explanation

The captain must wear an armband which is simple and conforms to the requirements of Law 4 relating to slogans, statements, images and advertising. It may be issued or authorised by the competition organiser.

Law 4 – The Players’ Equipment

2. Compulsory equipment & 4. Other equipment

Amended text

2. Compulsory equipment

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

- (...)

~~Goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms.~~

(...)

4. Other equipment

Non-dangerous protective equipment, for example gloves, headgear, facemasks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material is permitted, as are goalkeepers’ caps and sports spectacles. Goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms.

Explanation

Reference to gloves has been included under ‘Other equipment’ to reflect the fact that they are widely used, especially by goalkeepers. Reference to tracksuit bottoms for goalkeepers has been removed from ‘Compulsory equipment’ and included under ‘Other equipment’ to accurately reflect the fact that they are not compulsory.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

3. Disciplinary action

Amended text

(...)

Cautions for unsporting behaviour

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

- (...)
- handles the ball to interfere with or stop a promising attack, except where the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- (...)

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 committing a deliberate handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence outside their own penalty area
- (...)

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

(...)

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

Explanation

Non-deliberate handball offences are usually the result of a player attempting to play fairly, so when a penalty kick is awarded for such offences, the same philosophy should apply as for offences (fouls) which are an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball, i.e. DOGSO offences result in a yellow card and SPA offences result in no card. Deliberate handball remains a red-card offence when a penalty kick is awarded, as it is similar to holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

1. Procedure

Amended text

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

Explanation

Clarification regarding the ball position for a penalty kick, as there can be disputes and/or delays, especially when the penalty mark is not a 'spot'. Part of the ball must touch or overhang the centre of the penalty mark (just as the ball must be inside the corner area, including overhanging the corner arc, at a corner kick). As with other positional matters, if ground conditions dictate a slight change, this is a decision for the referee.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

2. Offences and sanctions

Additional text

(...)

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

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

Explanation

Player encroachment can be difficult to detect and manage, especially at the lower levels of the game, where there may be no neutral assistant referees. However, it can easily be identified by the video assistant referee, and if Law 14 were to be applied strictly, most penalty kicks would be retaken. Since encroachment rarely affects the outcome of the kick (only if the ball rebounds into play), the same principle should apply to player encroachment as to goalkeeper encroachment, i.e. it is penalised only if it has an impact.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

3. Summary table

Amended text

	Outcome of the penalty kick	
	Goal	No goal
Encroachment by attacking player	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: indirect free kick No impact: no retake
Encroachment by defending player	Impact: goal No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Encroachment by defending and attacking player	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Offence by goalkeeper	Goal	Not saved: penalty is not retaken (unless kicker is clearly impacted) Saved: penalty is retaken and warning for goalkeeper; caution for any further offence(s)
Goalkeeper and kicker offend at the same time	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
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

Guidelines for temporary dismissals (sin bins)

The guidelines have been revised and the main changes are as follows:

- To help manage temporary dismissals, a temporarily dismissed player can return to the field of play only during a stoppage after the end of the temporary dismissal period, i.e. not while the ball is in play
- If a temporary dismissal period is not completed at the end of the first half of extra time, it continues at the start of the second half of extra time (a temporary dismissal period cannot continue after the end of the second half of extra time, since temporary dismissals are not used in penalties (penalty shoot-out))
- System B, which uses temporary dismissals as an additional sanction for specific offences only, has been simplified so that any two cautionable offences in the same match will result in the player being (permanently) sent off (RC)
- 'Handball' has been changed to 'deliberate handball' in the list of offences that might be suitable for a temporary dismissal if they stop or interfere with a promising attack (System B)

