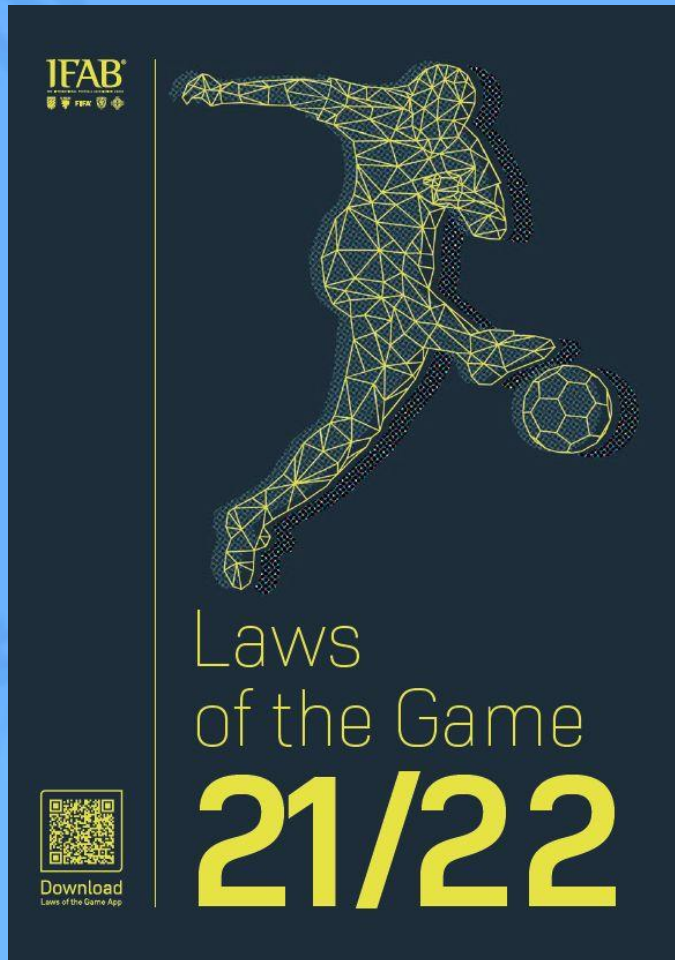


Changes to the Laws of the Game (LOTG) – 2020 & 2021 & 2022



The Laws marked with this symbol indicate those which have greater importance to AYSO for 10U-14U Levels of play.

A digital copy of the Laws of the Game (LOTG) for 2021/2022 can be found on the Section 1 Website or downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Download the IFAB [LOTG App for iOS or Android](#), updated for the 2021-22 season.

AYSO Header Rule



Consistent with the U.S. Soccer mandates on heading the ball, *deliberate* heading is banned for all AYSO division players 12U and below in both practices and games.

There are no restrictions on heading the ball during a game in divisions *older* than 12U.

- An Indirect Free Kick (IFK) will be awarded to the opposing team if a player on a 12U or younger team *deliberately* touches the ball with his/her head during a game.
 - The IFK is to be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head. (This includes within the Penalty Area, but not within the Goal Area, which is described below.)
 - An IFK awarded to the attacking team inside the opposing team's Goal Area, must be taken on the Goal Area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the player touched the ball with his/her head.

AYSO Header Rule



- **No punts or drop kicks at 10U, 8U & 7U**
 - Restart is IFK by opposing team at spot ball was punted
- **No “deliberate” heading at 12U, 10U, 8U & 7U**
 - It is important to note the operative word, “deliberate”, as it applies to this new rule. This new rule requires *the referee to make a judgement* regarding whether the use of the head was deliberate or accidental.
- **Neither Cautions nor Send-Offs shall be issued for persistent offenses or denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity related to the heading infraction.**



Laws of the Game (LOTG)

- 1 – The Field of Play
- 2 – The Ball
- 3 – The Players
- 4 – Players' Equipment
- 5 – The Referee
- 6 – The Other Match Officials
- 7 – The Duration of the Match
- 8 – The Start and Restart of Play
- 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play
- 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match
- 11 – Offside
- 12 – Fouls and Misconduct
- 13 – Free Kicks
- 14 – The Penalty Kick
- 15 – The Throw-in
- 16 – The Goal Kick
- 17 – The Corner Kick
- 18 – *Common Sense*
- 19 – *Consistency*

Law Revision – Law 3

(The Players)



- **A player who is being substituted must leave the field by the nearest point on the touchline/goal line (unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly/immediately at the halfway line or a different point because of safety, injury, etc.)**

This only applies to 16U and 19U divisions, which allows for substitutions throughout the game (i.e., any stoppage of play with the Referee's permission), as opposed to quarter substitution breaks for all other divisions.

Law Revision – Law 5

(The Referee)



- **Coaches and Assistant Coaches (“Team Officials”)** may be **Cautioned** (shown a **Yellow card**) and/or **Dismissed** (showed a **Red card**) for misconduct.

[Previously: Team Officials were not shown cards, but simply talked to. This change provides the Referee with another tool to warn and/or dismiss a Team Official such that everyone understands what action was taken.]

Law Revision – Law 5

(Referee Advantage Signal)



- In addition to the current ‘two armed’ signal used by the Referee to call “Advantage”, a similar ‘one arm’ signal is now permitted (as it is not always easy for referees to run with both arms extended).
- The Referee should still shout “Advantage” or “Play On” while signaling.

[Previously: Referees extended both arms (and shouted “Advantage” or “Play On”) to indicate “Advantage”.]

Law Revision – Law 8

(The Start and Restart of Play)



- The team that wins the toss can now choose to take the kick-off *or* which goal to attack.

[Previously: The team that won the coin toss could only choose which goal to attack.]

Law Revision – Law 8

(The Start and Restart of Play)



Dropped Ball

- If play is stopped when the ball is in the penalty area, e.g., a dog on the field, the ball will be dropped to the goalkeeper.
- If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped to one player of the team that *last touched the ball at the point of the last touch*.
- In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least 4m (4.5 yards) away.

Law Revision – Law 9

(The Ball In and Out of Play)



- If the ball touches the Referee (or another match official) and
 - goes into the goal,
 - team possession changes, or
 - a promising attack starts

a dropped ball is awarded to the team *that last played the ball*, except when the ball hits the Referee in the Penalty Area – then it is always dropped to the defending team’s Goal Keeper.

[Previously: The referee was considered to be like “a blade of grass”, and therefore, play continued even after being hit by a ball.]

Law Revision – Law 10

(Determining the Outcome of a Match)



- **Cautions (Yellow cards) and warnings are *not* carried forward into the kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM) phase of play.**
 - In other words, during KFPM, all players start with a “clean slate” of warnings and/or Cautions. Obviously, any player who received a Send-Off during “regular play” is still not allowed to play.

[Previously: All Cautions were carried forward to the KFPM phase of play to determine a winner in a tied match.]

Law Revision – Law 11

(Offside)



- **Deliberate handball by a defending player is considered ‘deliberate play’ for offside .**

[Previously: It was unclear whether a defensive player *who deliberately committed handball* and then ball then went to an offensive player who was in an offside-position should be considered to have played the ball, i.e., changed the moment of decision for determining if an offensive player is offside.]

Law Revision – Law 12

(Fouls & Misconduct)



- **Not every touch of a player's hand/arm with the ball is an offence.**
- **The following handball situations, *even if accidental*, will be a free kick:**
 - **The ball *goes into the goal* after touching an attacking player's hand/arm.**
 - **A player gains control/possession of the ball after it has touches their hand/arm *and then scores, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity*.**
 - **The ball touches a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger.**
 - **The ball touches a player's hand/arm when it is above their shoulder.**

Law Revision – Law 12

(Fouls & Misconduct)



(continued...)

The following handball situations, *even if accidental*, will be a free kick:

- **A player scores in the opponents' goal:**
 - directly from their hand/arm, including by the goalkeeper
 - immediately after the ball has touched their hand/arm

Law Revision – Law 12

(Fouls & Misconduct)



- **The following will *not usually be a free kick*:**
 - The ball touches a player’s hand/arm directly from their own head/body/foot or the head/body/foot of another player who is close/near, assuming that the hand/arm are not in an “unnatural position”.
 - The ball touches a player’s hand/arm which is close to their body and has not made their body unnaturally bigger.
 - If a player is falling and the ball touches their hand/arm when it is between their body and the ground to support the body (but not extended to make the body bigger).
 - If the goalkeeper attempts to ‘clear’ (release into play) a throw-in or deliberate kick from a teammate but the ‘clearance’ fails, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball.
 - Accidental handball by a *teammate* before a goal is scored and has created a goal-scoring opportunity.

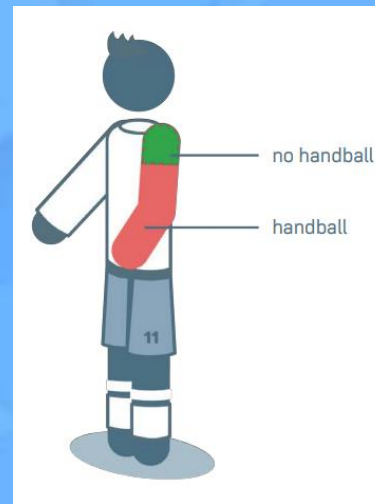
Law Revision – Law 12

(Fouls & Misconduct)



- **Handball**

- The boundary between the shoulder and the arm is defined as the bottom of the armpit.



- ‘Accidental’ handball by an attacking player (*not a teammate*) is only penalized if a goal is scored or it creates a clear goal-scoring opportunity.

Law Revision – Law 13

(Free Kicks)



- **When there is a ‘wall’ of three or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1m (1 yard) of the wall.**
 - **If an attacker is less than 1m (1yard) from the ‘wall’ when the kick is taken, he/she will be penalized with an Indirect Free Kick**

[Previously: The ‘wall’ could contain both defensive and offensive players, which could result in pushing, confrontation, etc. This change to Law 13 attempts to eliminate this issue.]

Law Revision – Law 13

(Free Kicks)



- **When the defending team takes a free kick in their own penalty area, the ball is in play once the kick is taken; it does not have to leave the penalty area before it can be played.**

[Previously: The ball needed to leave the penalty area before it was considered to be “in play”.]

Law Revision – Law 13

(Indirect Free Kicks)



- The referee indicates an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) by raising the arm above the head.
- This arm signal is maintained until the kick has been taken and (a) the ball touches another player, (b) goes out of play or (c) *it is clear that a goal cannot be scored directly.*

[Previously: The Referee's arm stayed up until the ball touched another player or went out of play. Option (c) is new.]

Law Revision – Law 14

(Penalty Kick)



- The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken and cannot stand behind the line.
- The goalkeeper is warned for the first offense, and then Cautioned (Yellow card) for any further offense(s).
- The kicker is penalized if the goalkeeper and the kicker offend at exactly the same time.

Law Revision – Law 16

(The Goal Kick)



- The ball is in play once the kick is taken, i.e., it can be played *before* leaving the penalty area.

[Previously: The ball needed to have left the penalty area before it was “in play”.]



Referee/Game Mechanics

- ***One or two*** raised arms indicates Advantage (along with loudly saying “Advantage”).
- The referee can lower his/her arm after a Indirect Free Kick (IFK) and before it is played by another player ***if it is clear that a goal can not be scored directly from the IFK.***



Should you have any questions, please contact your Regional Director of Referee Instruction.

Thank you and have a great season!