

North Reading Youth Soccer Laws of the Game for Grade 1

Law 1 – The Field of Play

The field of play must be rectangular and marked with continuous lines. These lines belong to the areas of which they are boundaries.

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 center mark is located at the midpoint of the halfway line. It may or may not actually be marked, and it may or may not have a circle around it.

A pug net goal is to be placed on the center of each goal line. The referee shall inspect the goals prior to the start of the game to ensure neither poses a safety hazard to the players.

Law 2 – The Ball

A size 3 ball shall be used.

Prior to the start of the game, the referee shall inspect the ball to ensure that it is properly inflated and safe to use.

The ball may not be changed during the match without the referee's permission. The referee shall ensure that the replacement ball is also properly inflated and safe to use.

If the ball becomes defective during active play, the referee must:

- Stop play immediately
- Have the ball replaced
- Restart play by awarding a FK to the team in possession at the time play was stopped

If the referee notices that the ball has become defective during a stoppage in play, the referee must:

- Have the ball replaced
- Restart play with the normal restart for the stoppage in play.

Law 3 – The Players

Definitions:

- Player – a member of a team currently taking part in the game
- Substitute – a member of a team not currently taking part in the game
- Team Official – the team's coaches
- Outside Agent – anyone else
- Substitution – the process by which a Substitute enters the field and becomes a Player, who then leaves the field and becomes a Substitute.
- Opponent – A Player on the opposite team

Number of Players

A match is played by two teams, each with 3 Players (3v3) or 4 Players (4v4), depending on the number of team members present – the coaches will decide before the match.

There are NO goalkeepers.

Number of Substitutions

There are no limits to the number of substitutions a team may make. A Player who is substituted off may reenter the game in a later substitution.

Substitution Procedure

All substitutions must be made only with the referee's permission.

All Substitutes must enter the field of play at midfield.

Substitutions may be made at any stoppage in play. When the substitution procedure is complete, the referee should ensure that the correct number of Players are present before restarting play.

Substitutions may also be made "on the fly", in which case the Player must first leave the field before the Substitute enters the field.

The referee should allow substitutions for injuries and other situations when a Player wants/needs to leave the field.

Extra persons on the field of play

If a Team Official or Outside Agent enters the field during active play, the referee must:

- Stop play only if there is interference with play
- Have the person removed
- Restart play by awarding a FK to the team in possession at the time play was stopped

If the referee notices that there are too many kids for a team on the field (i.e. a Substitute entered the field without a Player leaving the field) *during active play*, the referee must:

- Stop play immediately
- Have the coach either complete the substitution procedure or remove the Substitute who entered the field of play
- Restart play by awarding a FK to the team in possession at the time play was stopped

If the referee notices that a team has too many kids on the field *at a stoppage in play*, the referee must

- Have the coach either complete the substitution procedure or remove the Substitute who entered the field of play.
- Restart play with the normal restart for the stoppage in play.

If the stoppage in play occurred because a goal was scored, the same process shall be followed. If the team with too many kids on the field scored it, the referee shall inform the coaches that the goal is being disallowed.

If the referee fails to notice that a team scored a goal with too many kids on the field until after play has resumed, the goal shall stand.

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment

Safety

A Player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous.

The following items are considered dangerous and Players are prohibited from wearing them on the field:

- Hard hair clips
- Casts
- Watches
- Hats with brims
- Helmets
- Jewelry (with the exception of Medical Alert bracelets and religious items) - It does not matter if the jewelry is taped; it is still not allowed to be worn on the field of play.
- Anything else that in the opinion of the referee poses a safety hazard to the Player or anyone else.

If a Player wears a Medical Alert bracelet, it must be taped to the body but with the medical information still visible.

If a Player wears a religious item, the referee must ensure that it does not pose a safety hazard to the Player or anyone else on the field of play.

The referee shall inspect all team members before the start of the match to ensure compliance with this law, and shall not permit anyone not in compliance to enter the field of play.

Compulsory and Recommended Equipment

- Team jersey
- Shin guards
- Footwear (must be safe, tied securely, have no sharp or rough edges, and no toe cleats)
- Shorts are recommended
- In cold weather, a jacket or sweatshirt may be worn UNDER the jersey, and sweatpants OVER shorts.
- Soft caps may be worn on the head.

If a Player loses a shoe or shin guard during active play, the referee should stop play immediately to let the Player retrieve the lost equipment. Restart play by awarding a FK to the team in possession at the time play was stopped.

Colors

The referee should ensure that each team wears jerseys of the same color and clearly different from that worn by the opposing team.

Law 5 – The Referee

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.

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 the facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored, are final.

The referee may not change a decision on realizing that it is incorrect or on the advice of any other person if play has restarted or the referee has signaled the end of the first or second half and left the field of play or terminated the match.

Powers and Duties

The referee:

- Enforces the Laws of the Game
- Controls the match
- Acts as timekeeper
- Provides appropriate authorities with information on disciplinary action and any other incidents that occurred before, during, or after the match
- Supervises and/or indicates the restart of play
- Takes action against Team Officials who fail to act in a responsible manner and may expel them from the field of play and its immediate surrounds
- Stops play if a Player is injured or is bleeding, and ensures that the Player is removed from the field of play
- Allows no unauthorized persons to enter the field of play

Referee's Equipment

Compulsory Equipment:

- Whistle
- Watch
- Proper Referee Jersey

Other Equipment

- Notebook or other means of keeping a record of the match

Referees are prohibited from wearing jewelry.

Referee Signals

Goal Scored – Arm pointing towards the center mark.

Free Kick (FK) – Arm raised and pointing towards the goal being attacked by the team awarded the free kick.

Referee Whistle Use

Referees should blow their whistles:

- any time there is a stoppage in play:
 - Goal scored
 - Ball out of play
 - End of first half or game
- when they need to stop play:
 - Injury
 - Outside Agent interfering with play
 - To signal that a FK should be retaken
 - Etc.
- to signal a Player to:

- take a kick-off at the start of the game or second half
- take a kick-off after a goal is scored

Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

Not applicable

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

Each game has two 16-minute halves. There is a 3-minute half-time break.

These rules are subject to change based on numbers of teams and team members. Referees will be advised of any changes prior to their matches.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

A kick-off starts both halves of a match. The kick-off is a special form of a Free Kick (FK). FKs are discussed in more detail in Law 13.

Kick-off Procedure

- Coaches decide among themselves who takes the kick-off, and which direction the teams will attack at the start of the game.
- Kick-offs are taken from the center mark. If the center mark is not actually marked on the field, the kick-off shall be taken from the point the referee believes the mark would have been located.
- At the start of the second half, the teams switch ends of the field, and the kick-off is taken by the team that didn't take it at the start of the game.

Law 9 – The Ball in and out of Play

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

Ball in play

The ball is in play at all other times, including when it rebounds off a match official or part of the goal, and remains in the field of play.

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

Not applicable

Law 11 – Offside

Not applicable

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Fouls

A foul is committed if a Player:

- *deliberately* handles the ball.
- *deliberately* plays, or attempts to play, the ball with his/her head.
- commits any of the following acts against an Opponent:
 - charges
 - jumps at
 - kicks or attempts to kick
 - pushes
 - strikes or attempts to strike (including using his/her head)
 - tackles
 - trips or attempts to trip
 - holds
 - spits at
 - impedes with contact
- Plays in a manner that poses a danger to himself, another Player, or an Opponent (for example, high kicks near an Opponent's head)

When a foul is committed by a Player, the referee must stop play, explain to the player why play was stopped, and then restart play with a FK to the Player's opponents.

If the Player commits a foul without regard to the safety to him/herself or opponents, or repeatedly commits fouls, then the referee should inform the coach, and have him/her substitute the Player off before restarting play. The coach should use this opportunity to give the Player a break and to have a discussion with the Player.

No yellow or red cards shall be issued by the referee.

Misconduct

Misconduct applies in situations that do not involve a Player and an Opponent. Some examples include:

- A Substitute interfering with play or committing one of the acts described above in the Fouls section.
- A Player fighting with a teammate.
- A Team Official misbehaving towards the referee or Team Officials from the other team.
- A Player showing disrespect towards the referee.

When misconduct occurs, the referee must stop play, and get Team Officials, the referee mentor, or a NRYS official involved to deal with the problem. Once the problem is resolved, restart play with a FK to the team in possession at the time play was stopped.

Law 13 – Free Kicks

All Free Kicks are indirect. No PKs shall be awarded.

Free Kick Procedure

Prior to the kick, the referee should direct the defensive team (the team not taking the kick) to back up to provide room for the kicking team to play the ball.

The ball must be stationary at the time it is kicked. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves. The defensive team must not then play the ball until it has been touched by a member of the attacking team (free first pass).

After the ball is in play, if the kicker touches the ball before it has touched another Player, the referee should blow the whistle to stop play, explain to the player that [s]he may not touch the ball before someone else does, and signal for the FK to be retaken.

Where Kicks are to be Taken

FKs are used for all restarts including:

- After a goal is scored
- When the ball leaves the field by going over a touchline
- When the ball leaves the field by going over a goal line
- At the start of the game or the second half of the game (kick-offs are also FKs)
- Any other time when the referee blows the whistle to halt play

FKs After a Goal is Scored

The kick is to be taken from the center mark (same as for a kick-off). The team scored upon takes the kick.

FKs After Ball Leaves Field Going Over a Touchline

The kick is to be taken from the point on the touch closest to where the ball went out of play. The team that did not last touch the ball before it went out of play takes the kick.

FKs After Ball Leaves Field Going Over a Goal Line

If the defending team last touched the ball before it went over its own goal line, then the attacking team takes the kick on the touchline closest to where the ball went out of play. The ball should be positioned on that touchline no further than 1 yard from the goal line.

If the attacking team last touched the ball before it went over the opponent's goal line, then the defending team takes the kick anywhere along its own goal line. The attacking team must retreat back into their own half of the field prior to the kick being taken.

- Note: A goal may not be scored directly from a FK. The ball must first touch another player before entering the goal for a goal to be awarded. If the ball enters the net directly from a FK, the referee should treat this as the attacking team last touching the ball before it went over the opponent's goal line.

FKs Any Other Time

The kick is to be taken from the point where the ball was when the referee stopped play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

Not applicable. Penalty kicks are not used.

Law 15 – The Throw-in

Not applicable. Throw-ins are not used.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick

Not applicable. Goal kicks are not used.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick

Not applicable. Corner kicks are not used.

“Law 18” – Common Sense

This isn't in the FIFA Laws, but all officials need to use their best judgment to keep NRYS matches SAFE- FAIR- FUN. The players are young children who are still learning the game and part of your responsibility is to help them learn. Use your whistle and hand signals, and use your voice to explain, direct and instruct. Be patient, and have fun!