

Summary of Modified FIFA Laws of the Game	Note
<p><u>Law 1: The Field of Play</u> For safety reasons, check the field conditions and the integrity of the goals and nets to ensure that they are fastened to the ground, goal posts and crossbar prior to each game and that the nets do not interfere with the goalkeeper. The goal lines, touch lines, penalty area and half line should be well defined. All lines are in play. A ball is not out of play until the entire ball crosses over the line.</p>	<p>Dimensions (Approximate) U10 – 60yd x 40yd U12 – 70yd x 50yd</p>
<p><u>Law 2: The Ball</u> Balls should be properly inflated. Hold the ball head high, after dropping its bounce should reach waist level. Roundness can be determined by tossing it in the air while causing it to spin. No wobble should be seen. Use only safe soccer balls - some balls can become hard or heavy in cold and rain, or panels can detach and cause cuts.</p>	<p>U10 - Size 4 U12 - Size 4</p>
<p><u>Law 3: The Number of Players</u> Each team should start the number of players for its age bracket, with one of those being a goalkeeper. Unlike FIFA governed games, substitutions are unlimited. Both teams may substitute at the end of the period, after a goal, or on goal kicks. The team in possession may substitute on throw-ins. If the team in possession substitutes on any throw-in, the team not in possession may then substitute.</p> <p>Opponents of a team substituting because of injury may substitute on a one for one basis.</p> <p>Substitutes remain on the bench until requested to enter the field by the coach. Substitutes may enter only with the permission of the referee – during a stoppage of play – at permitted times.</p> <p>The referee must be informed of any keeper change.</p>	<p>Unlimited substitution – Please try to give equal playing time to all players.</p> <p>U10G - 7 v 7 U10B; U12 - 8 v 8</p> <p>U10 must have 7, U12 8, to start a game. Teams are encouraged to play at even strength.</p> <p>If teams are short handed, coaches are encouraged to scrimmage at even strength.</p>
<p><u>Law 4: Player Equipment</u> The player may not wear anything that could be harmful to himself or another player. Jewelry - watches, earrings, bracelets – are prohibited. Players MUST wear: A shirt, shorts, socks (covering shin guards), shin guards and footwear. If the uniform shirt is unavailable, a shirt of the same color must be worn. Goalkeepers MUST wear colors that distinguish them from the other players and officials.</p>	<p>Soccer cleats (rubber only) are essential for proper play – (though not required).</p>

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<p><u>Law 5: The Referee</u></p> <p>The referee has full authority to enforce the 17 Laws. The referee's decisions are final and not subject to appeal. This authority extends to the coaches <u>and other spectators</u>, if needed. The referee has the right to call or not call any foul that is deemed necessary. This extends to the Advantage Rule, which permits the attacking team to keep possession of the ball should there be a defensive foul.</p> <p><i>Spirit of the Rules – Soccer games should proceed with as little interruption as possible. FIFA: "Constant whistle blowing for trifling and doubtful breaches produces bad feeling and loss of temper on the part of the players, and spoils the pleasure of the spectators."</i></p>	<p>No coach, player, parent or spectator is to challenge the referee's judgment. Offenders may be red-carded (Law 12), resulting in a disadvantage to the offending team. Spectators also could be asked to leave the area.</p>
<p><u>Law 6: The Assistant Referees</u></p> <p>Assistant referees are present to 'assist' the referee. They do this by drawing the attention of the referee to situations that he may not have seen. They are also critical in calling the ball in and out of play and alerting the referee to substitutions. And, they alert the referee to offside situations.</p>	<p>Typically, the programs will employ a 2-man system, with 1 referee on each side of the field.</p>
<p><u>Law 7: The Duration of the Match</u></p> <p>The clock does not stop, but the referee has the authority to add time to a match as a result of injuries, substitutions, delays in putting the ball back into play or any other reason deemed necessary. The referee is the sole timekeeper and is the only official who can end a game. If a ball is in flight and the referee signals the end of the game, the ball becomes dead at that point (a dead ball can't be scored). Matches can end in a tie (draw).</p>	<p>U10 – 25 minute halves, 5 minute halftime. No time-outs.</p> <p>U12 – 25 minute halves, 5 minute halftime. No time-outs.</p>

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<p><u>Law 8: Start and Restart of Play</u> A coin toss is used to determine start of play. The team winning the toss must decide which goal it will defend. The opposing team takes the kickoff. Teams alternate kickoffs by period. For the second half teams switch ends. A kickoff is a method to start play and to restart play after a goal is scored or at the beginning of a period. A goal may be scored from a kickoff.</p> <p>At kickoff, all players are in their own half of the field. Opponents of the team taking the kickoff must be at least 10 yards from the ball until the ball is put in play. Upon signal by the referee, the ball is played forward. The initial kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.</p> <p>Drop ball is a method of restart used when the game is stopped and the rules do not specify that a different restart should apply. The referee drops the ball at the spot where the ball was last played. The ball must touch the ground before being kicked. The drop is retaken if the ball is touched before the ball hits the ground. A dropped ball can not be taken within 6 yards of the goal.</p>	<p>For learning purposes, referees should allow time and instruct players to get ready for the drop ball.</p>
<p><u>Law 9: Ball in and out of play</u> The ball is in play following any of the prescribed methods of start and restart. The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line – on the ground or in the air, or when the game has been stopped by the referee.</p>	<p>A ball touching the line is in play. A player outside of the field of play may still play the ball.</p>
<p><u>Law 10: The Method of Scoring</u> A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.</p>	<p>“Breaking the plane” of the goal line is not a goal.</p>
<p><u>Law 11: Offside</u> It is not an offence in itself to be in an offside position.</p> <p>A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponents’ goal line than both the ball and the second to last opponent.</p> <p>A player who is in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by (1) interfering with play, (2) interfering with an opponent or (3) gaining an advantage by being in that position.</p>	<p>Offside is the most misunderstood of all of the Laws. The actual determination of offside can be very difficult even for the best referees—because there are so many variables. A player who is even with the 2nd to last defender is to be considered onside.</p>

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<p>Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct</p> <p>Major Fouls – result in Direct Free Kick: A direct kick is awarded from the point of foul if a player commits any of the following in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force - kicking or attempting to kick, tripping or attempting to trip, striking or attempting to strike, jumping at an opponent, charging (physically moving an opponent away from the ball - a fair charge is shoulder-to-shoulder while playing the ball) and pushing. A direct kick is awarded if player holds, spits or handles the ball - using the arms or hands intentionally and deliberately.</p> <p>A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above offences is committed by a player inside his own penalty area.</p> <p>Minor Fouls – result in Indirect Free Kick: Obstruction (impeding the progress of an opponent by not allowing him to get within playing distance of the ball), dangerous play (typically kicking to the head or torso.) Playing on the ground is only a foul when in close proximity of opponents.</p> <p>Misconduct: Yellow Card: Cautionary. (2 yellow cards equal a red card.) It's possible that a yellow will not be shown immediately, especially when 'advantage' is being applied—the ref will show the yellow at the next stoppage in play. Red Card: The individual is sent off the field and not permitted to return. The affected team plays short that player for the remainder of the game. If more than one player from the same team is sent off, that team will play that number down. Red cards are given immediately following the foul.</p>	<p>Slide tackles are not permitted under any circumstances and result in a direct kick from the point of foul; but an indirect kick if occurring in the penalty box. The goalkeeper may handle the ball within the penalty area. However, the keeper may not use his hands on a ball that is intentionally kicked to him by a teammate, or directly from a teammate on a throw-in. Result is an indirect free kick from spot of the infraction.</p> <p>Players, or coaches, who receive a red card will not be allowed to participate in the next game and may face suspension.</p>
<p>Law 13: Free Kicks</p> <p>Indirect - The ball has to be touched by a second player (any other player, either the team in possession or the team not in possession) before a goal will be awarded. Distinguished by the referee holding one arm straight over head until the second touch takes place. Direct - The kicker can score directly on the kick. Referee points briefly in the attacking direction.</p> <p>On any free kick, the ball is placed at the site of the foul and must be stationary. Opposing players must be at least 10 yards away. The ball needs to only move in any direction to be considered in play. A foul within the goal area is moved to the line forming the goal area.</p>	<p>Free kicks may be taken immediately. It is not necessary to allow opponents to recover.</p>

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<p><u>Law 14: The Penalty Kick</u> Awarded to offensive team for Major Fouls committed by the defense within the penalty area. The penalty kick is a direct free kick taken 12 yards from the goal – the Penalty Mark. If the mark is unclear, the referee will step-off the 12 yards. All players except the penalty taker and the goalkeeper remain outside the penalty area, including the penalty arc (10 yards from the penalty mark). The ball must be kicked forward and the goalkeeper must remain on his goal line until the ball is kicked—the keeper may move between the goal posts, but not forward. The ball cannot be touched a second time by the penalty taker until the ball has been touched by another player, meaning if the ball hits the crossbar or goal post, the ball must be touched by someone other than the kicker. Infringement results in an indirect free kick from the spot of the second touch. The penalty taker must wait for the referee's signal before taking the penalty kick.</p>	
<p><u>Law 15: The Throw-In</u> This is a method of restart when the opposing team kicks the ball out over the touch line. The thrower must: Face the field, have part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line, use both hands and deliver the ball from behind and over his head. The throwing team's goalkeeper may not handle a ball. The thrower may not touch the ball until the ball has been touched by another player. Stationing a player in front of the thrower is permitted, but that person is not permitted to take any actions that will impede the throw. Referees are encouraged to demonstrate correct throw-in technique in early play.</p>	<p>U10 - Until Oct. 1, the referee may allow a player to repeat a technically incorrect throw-in, without penalty. After Oct. 1, incorrect throw-ins are subject to the ordinary penalty of turnover.</p>
<p><u>Law 16: Goal Kick</u> A method of restart used when the ball, having last been touched by an attacking player, passes over the goal line at any point except between the goal posts. The defending team takes the kick. The ball may be placed anywhere inside the goal area. The ball is not in play until it exits the penalty area, and, after kicked, it may not be touched by any player before it leaves the penalty area. The opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. After the initial kick, the kicker may not play the ball a second time until the ball has been touched by another player. Goal kicks are direct.</p>	
<p><u>Law 17: Corner Kick</u> A method of restart used when the ball, having last been touched by the defending team, passes over the goal line at any point except between the goal posts. The attacking team takes the kick from the corner nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line. Goal kicks are direct kicks, and there is no offside on the initial kick. The attacking team is permitted to station players near the goalkeeper, but they are not permitted to interfere with his attempt to get the ball.</p>	<p>Corner flags may not be held, touched, or removed.</p>

LAW 18 – The Unofficial Law

There is no “Law 18”, but just the same you’ll sometimes hear referees refer to it as the most important of all the Laws of the Game (LOTG), because it overrides all the others. It’s simply the application of common sense in interpreting and applying the Laws so as to ensure that a referee’s decisions don’t go against the Spirit of the Game (SOTG). “Law 18” provides that common sense and SOTG are always more important than the letter of the law. The “spirit of the game” is something that all referees have to judge for themselves based on their experience and their conception of what soccer is, but for most referees a number of factors are important:

natural justice—it’s important not to penalize players unfairly by applying the letter of law when that would contravene the spirit or the intention of the law;

flow of the game—a good referee lets the players play with the minimum number of interruptions but without losing control of the match; and

letting the players determine the outcome of the match.

Two factors in particular need to be stressed, because they help to distinguish soccer from other common team sports, and because they can lead to decisions by officials that are mystifying for spectators who are unaware of the basic differences between soccer and other sports.

Tradition—Much of soccer is based on letting the game be played as it evolved, and the LOTG simply are intended to give referees a basis on which to mediate disputes. A basic difference between soccer and other sports is that the referee is a “judge” who interprets the LOTG and applies them as needed to settle disputes between players and teams, not a policeman who applies every LOTG exactly as written to every single violation.

Intent of the Law—Many soccer laws are intended to control certain things (time wasting, for instance) but could be misapplied to other things. It is important for every coach, player and referee to understand the history and intent of each law in order to understand the true SOTG.