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Laws of the Game App





Effective from 1 ${ }^{\text {st }}$ July 2023


LaWs of the Game 2023/24

## Contents

About the Laws ..... 9
Notes and modifications ..... 16
Notes on the Laws of the Game ..... 17
General modifications ..... 20
Guidelines for temporary dismissals (sin bins) ..... 22
Guidelines for return substitutes ..... 26
Laws of the Game 2023/24 ..... 29
1 The Field of Play ..... 31
2 The Ball ..... 41
3 The Players ..... 45
4 The Players' Equipment ..... 53
5 The Referee ..... 59
6 The Other Match Officials ..... 69
7 The Duration of the Match ..... 77
8 The Start and Restart of Play ..... 81
9 The Ball in and out of Play ..... 85
10 Determining the Outcome of a Match ..... 87
11 Offside ..... 93
12 Fouls and Misconduct ..... 99
13 Free Kicks ..... 115
14 The Penalty Kick ..... 119
15 The Throw-in ..... 125
16 The Goal Kick ..... 129
17 The Corner Kick ..... 133
Video assistant referee (VAR) protocol ..... 136
FIFA Quality Programme ..... 146
Law changes 2023/24 ..... 150
Outline summary of Law changes ..... 151
Details of all Law changes ..... 154
Glossary ..... 162
Football bodies ..... 163
Football terms ..... 164
Referee terms ..... 174
Practical guidelines for match officials ..... 176
Introduction ..... 177
Positioning, movement and teamwork ..... 178
Body language, communication and whistle ..... 192
Other advice ..... 198

About the Laws

## IFAB



## IFAB

## The philosophy and spirit of the Laws

Football is the greatest sport on earth. It is played on every continent, in every country and at many different levels. The fact that the Laws of the Game are the same for all football throughout the world, from the FIFA World Cup ${ }^{\text {TM }}$ through to a game between young children in a remote village, is a considerable strength which must continue to be harnessed for the good of football everywhere.

Football must have Laws which keep the game fair - this is a crucial foundation of the 'beautiful game' and a vital feature of the 'spirit' of the game. The best matches are those where the referee is rarely needed because the players play with respect for each other, the match officials and the Laws.

Football's Laws are relatively simple compared to most other team sports, but as many situations are subjective and match officials are human, some decisions will inevitably be wrong or 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 must always be 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.

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 and the Laws - this often involves asking the question, 'what would football want/expect?'

The Laws must also contribute to the safety and welfare of players and it is The IFAB's responsibility to react quickly and appropriately to support the game's participants, through the Laws themselves, when the need arises. For example, a temporary amendment to Law 3 was introduced in response to the

COVID-19 pandemic to give top competitions the option of increasing the maximum number of substitutions for each team from three to five. That amendment became part of the Laws of the Game in 2022. Trials are also continuing with additional 'concussion substitutes' so that teams can prioritise the welfare of a player who has an actual or suspected concussion without suffering a numerical disadvantage.

Accidents inevitably occur, but the Laws aim to help make the game as safe as possible, balancing player welfare and sporting fairness. This requires referees to use the Laws to deal strongly with those players whose actions are too aggressive or dangerous. The Laws embody the unacceptability of unsafe play in their disciplinary phrases, such as 'reckless challenge' and 'endangering the safety of an opponent' or 'using excessive force'.

To promote a greater understanding of the Laws, The IFAB has published 'Football Rules - simplified Laws of the Game', which have been written to make the Laws easier to understand, especially for young people, potential or newly qualified referees, adults who referee occasionally, players, coaches (including those working towards a coaching qualification), spectators and the media.

Visit www.footballrules.com to access or download Football Rules, which can be sorted alphabetically or by category.

## IFAB



# Managing changes to the Laws 

Football must remain attractive and enjoyable for players, match officials and coaches, as well as spectators, fans and administrators, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability.

Therefore, for a Law to be changed, The IFAB and all its bodies that are involved in the decision-making process must be convinced that the change will benefit the game; this sometimes means that the potential change needs to be tested.

For every proposed change, the focus is on fairness, integrity, respect, safety, the enjoyment of participants and spectators and, where appropriate, using technology to enhance the game.

The IFAB will continue to engage with the global football community so that changes to the Laws benefit football at all levels and in every corner of the world, and so that the integrity of the game, the Laws and the match officials are respected, valued and protected.

## The future

The IFAB will carry on its work with its advisory panels and its extensive consultation efforts, with a continued focus on player welfare, feedback from the 'concussion substitute' trial and making the game fairer and more attractive to take part in and watch.

It is also important to maintain the 'universality' of the Laws so that young players can watch matches on television and then go out and try to recreate what they have seen.

The IFAB greatly enjoys engaging with people throughout the world and we are always very pleased to receive suggestions or questions relating to the Laws of the Game. Indeed, many recent Law changes have originated 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 2023/24 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's website for use by others.

## Measurements

If there is any divergence between metric and imperial units, the metric units are authoritative.

## 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 'General modifications'), 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 highlighted in the margin. Editorial changes are underlined. YC = yellow card (caution); RC = red card (sending-off).


## General modifications

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. The IFAB strongly believes that national FAs should be able to modify some 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 ${ }^{\text {™ }}$ 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.

All national FAs (and confederations and FIFA) 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 all levels of the game:

- 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
*See also Law 3 for the conditions that apply to matches that go to extra time and details on the restriction on substitution opportunities.


## 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)

In addition, to allow national FAs further flexibility to benefit and develop their domestic football, the following changes relating to 'categories' of football are permitted:

- national FAs, confederations and FIFA have the flexibility to decide the age restrictions for youth and veterans football
- 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 or 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 modifications to 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 $131^{\text {st }}$ AGM of The IFAB held in London on $3^{\text {rd }}$ 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out).

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, fourth 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 cannot 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out)


## 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 two 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 offences relating to 'inappropriate' behaviour, e.g.
- Simulation
- Deliberately delaying the opposing team's restart of the match
- Dissent or verbal comments or gestures
- Stopping or interfering with a promising attack by holding, pulling, pushing or handball
- Kicker illegally feinting at a penalty kick


# Guidelines for return substitutes 

Following approval at the $131^{\text {st }} \mathrm{AGM}$ of The IFAB held in London on $3^{\text {rd }}$ 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.


IFAB



Law


## 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, 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 $9.15 \mathrm{~m}(10 \mathrm{yds})$ is marked around it.


- Measurements are from the outside of the lines as the lines are part of the area they enclose.
- The penalty mark is measured from the centre of the mark to the back edge of the goal line.

Marks may be made off the field of play $9.15 \mathrm{~m}(10 \mathrm{yds})$ 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.

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- Length (touchline):
        minimum 90m (100 yds)
        maximum 120m (130 yds)
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- Length (goal line): minimum 45 m (50 yds)
maximum 90 m (100 yds)

Competitions may determine the length of the goal line and touchline within the above dimensions.

## 4. Dimensions for international matches

- Length (touchline):
minimum 100 m (110 yds)
maximum 110 m (120 yds)
- Length (goal line):
minimum $64 \mathrm{~m}(70 \mathrm{yds})$
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 (6yds) 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 $9.15 \mathrm{~m}(10 \mathrm{yds})$ 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 (1yd) 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 (1yd) outside the touchline.

## 9. The technical area

The technical area relates to matches played in stadiums with a designated sitting area for team officials, substitutes and substituted players as outlined below:

- the technical area should only extend $1 \mathrm{~m}(1 \mathrm{yd})$ on either side of the designated seated area and up to a distance of 1 m (1yd) 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 and must not be dangerous. The goalposts and crossbar of both goals must be the same shape, which must be square, rectangular, round, elliptical or a hybrid of these options.

It is recommended that all goals used in an official competition organised under the auspices of FIFA or confederations meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Programme for Football Goals.

The distance between the inside of the posts is $7.32 \mathrm{~m}(8 \mathrm{yds})$ and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is $2.44 \mathrm{~m}(8 \mathrm{ft})$.

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 cannot 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.

The use of GLT must be stipulated in the competition rules.

## IFAB

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


## 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); it may also be sent to the video operation room (VOR).

## Requirements and specifications of GLT

If GLT is used in competition matches, the competition organisers must ensure that the system (including any potentially permitted modifications to the goal frame or technology in the ball) meets the requirements of the FIFA Quality Programme for GLT.

Where GLT is used, the referee must test the technology's functionality before the match as set out in the 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.

## 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 (1yd) 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:

- $1 \mathrm{~m}(1 \mathrm{yd})$ from the touchlines
- the same distance from the goal line as the depth of the goal net
- 1 m (1yd) 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 the 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.

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## 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 $410 \mathrm{~g}(14 \mathrm{oz})$ and $450 \mathrm{~g}(16 \mathrm{oz})$ in weight at the start of the match
- of a pressure equal to 0.6-1.1 atmosphere ( $600-1,100 \mathrm{~g} / \mathrm{cm}^{2}$ ) 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 meet the requirements and bear one of the marks of the FIFA Quality Programme for Footballs.

Each mark indicates that the ball 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.

National FA 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 FAs, 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 with a dropped ball

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 penalties (penalty shoot-out) 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.


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## 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 on the team list 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. For men's and women's competitions involving the $1^{\text {st }}$ teams of clubs in the top division or senior ' A ' international teams where competition rules permit a maximum of five substitutes to be used, each team:

- has a maximum of three substitution opportunities*
- may additionally make substitutions at half-time
*Where both teams make a substitution at the same time, this will count as a used substitution opportunity for both teams. Multiple substitutions (and requests) by a team during the same stoppage in play count as one used substitution opportunity.


## Extra time

- If a team has not used the maximum number of substitutes and/or substitution opportunities, any unused substitutes and substitution opportunities may be used in extra time
- Where competition rules permit teams to use one additional substitute in extra time, each team will have one additional substitution opportunity
- Substitutions may also be made in the period between full-time and the start of extra time, and at half-time in extra time - these do not count as used substitution opportunities

The competition rules must state:

- how many substitutes may be named, from three to a maximum of fifteen
- 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 senior 'A' international team matches, a maximum of fifteen 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 a 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 action may be 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out)

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 cannot 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 cannot be replaced; the number of substitutions the team can make is not reduced
- after the kick-off cannot 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, that an extra person was on the field of play when the goal was scored, and that person interfered with play:

- 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 cannot 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.

IFAB



## IFAB

## 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, handheld equipment (e.g. microphone, headphone, earpiece, 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 players' equipment is not dangerous and meets the requirements for wearable EPTS under the FIFA Quality Programme for EPTS.

Where EPTS are provided by the match or competition organiser, it is the responsibility of that match or competition organiser to ensure that the information and data transmitted from EPTS to the technical area during matches played in an official competition are reliable and accurate.

The FIFA Quality Programme for EPTS supports competition organisers with the approval process of reliable and accurate electronic performance and tracking systems.

## 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 action(s)
- acting 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:

## IFAB

- 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, 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


## 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out)). 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out)
- 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


## IFAB

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 Implementation Assistance and Approval Programme (IAAP) requirements as set out in FIFA's IAAP documents, and has received written permission from 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 action(s).

## 5. Referee's equipment

## Compulsory equipment

Referees must have the following equipment:

- Whistle(s)
- Watch(es)
- 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.


Penalty kick


Indirect free kick


Direct free kick


Advantage (1)


Corner kick


Advantage (2)



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

IFAB


Law


## The Other Match Officials

Other match officials (two assistant referees, a fourth official, two additional assistant referees, a reserve assistant referee, a 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 (VMOs) and assist the referee in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the VAR protocol.

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.

The other '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 9.15 m (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

A reserve assistant referee may replace an assistant referee, fourth official or additional assistant referee who is unable to continue, and may also assist the referee in the same way as the other 'on-field' match officials.

## 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

Refer to graphics for approved assistant referee signals.


Substitution


Free kick for attacking team


Free kick for defending team


Throw-in for attacking team


Corner kick


Throw-in for defending team


Goal kick


Offside

Offside on the near side of the field



Offside in the
middle of the field

## IFAB

## 7. Additional assistant referee signals



Law 7

## 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 if 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 playing 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'
- goal celebrations
- any other cause, including any significant delay to a restart (e.g. due to interference by an outside agent)

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.


IFAB


Law


## 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 referee tosses a coin and the team that wins the toss 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


IFAB


Law


## 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.

IFAB


Law


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## 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 equal periods of extra time not exceeding 15 minutes each
- penalties (penalty shoot-out)

A combination of the above procedures may be used.
3. Penalties (penalty shoot-out)

Penalties (penalty shoot-out) are taken after the match has ended and unless otherwise stated, the relevant Laws of the Game apply. A player who has been sent off during the match is not permitted to take part; warnings and cautions issued to players and team officials during the match are not carried forward into penalties (penalty shoot-out).

## Procedure

## Before penalties (penalty shoot-out) 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 penalties (penalty shoot-out)

- 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 is warned for the first offence and cautioned for any subsequent offence(s)
- 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 the kicker commit an offence at the same time, the kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is 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
- Penalties (penalty shoot-out) 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 sendings-off during penalties (penalty shoot-out)

- A player, substitute, substituted player or team official 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

