



Laws of the Game 2020 - 2021

Changes / Clarifications

Law 1 – The Field of Play

- The goalposts and crossbar may be a combination of the four basic shapes

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match (Kicks from the penalty mark)

- Cautions (YCs) and warnings for players and team officials issued during the match (including during extra time) are not carried forward because kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM) are not part of the match.
- See also changes to Law 14 relating to KFPM

Law 11 – Offside

- Deliberate handball by a defending player is considered 'deliberate play' for offside. This does not apply to handball offences which are not deliberate.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- The boundary between the shoulder and the arm is defined as the bottom of the armpit
- Accidental handball by an attacking player (or team-mate) is only penalised if it occurs 'immediately' before a goal or clear goal-scoring opportunity
- If the goalkeeper takes a restart and then deliberately plays the ball a second time before it has touched another player and this 'illegal' second touch 'stops a promising attack' (SPA) or 'denies a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity' (DOGSO), in addition to the indirect free kick, the goalkeeper must now be cautioned or sent off, as appropriate. This applies even if the touch is with the hand/arm.
- Any offence (not only a foul) which **interferes with or stops a promising attack** should result in a YC i.e. playing the ball illegally a second time after a restart
- If the referee plays advantage for an offence which **interfered with or stopped a promising attack**, the caution (YC) is not issued.





- If the referee allows a 'quick' free kick for an offence which **interfered with or stopped a promising attack**, the YC is not issued
- A player who fails to respect the 4 meter (4.5 yard) required distance at a dropped ball should receive a YC
- A definition of the offence of holding has been included - A holding offence occurs only when a player's contact with an opponent's body or equipment impedes the opponent's movement

Law 13 – The Free Kick

- If at a free kick in the penalty area the goalkeeper 'flicks' the ball up and a team-mate heads/chests the ball back for the goalkeeper to catch, the kick is retaken; there is no disciplinary sanction (unless this occurs persistently).

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

- An offence by the goalkeeper is not penalised if a penalty kick misses the goal or rebounds from the goal (without a touch from the goalkeeper) unless the offence clearly affected the kicker
- The goalkeeper is warned for a first offence but must be cautioned (YC) for any further offence(s) at the retaken kick and/or any subsequent kick.
- The kicker is penalised if the goalkeeper and the kicker offend at exactly the same time

Law 16 – The Goal Kick

- If at a goal kick the goalkeeper 'flicks' the ball up and a team-mate heads/chests the ball back for the goalkeeper to catch, the kick is retaken; there is no disciplinary sanction (unless this occurs persistently).