

NTSC LAWS OF THE GAME 2019

The NTSC Laws of the Game contained in this document are a condensed version of the FIFA Laws of the Game. Some Laws have been modified to reflect appropriate applications for house league play.

Law 1. The Field of Play and Law 2. The Ball

Division	Field Size	Net Size	Ball Size	Max. Players	Min. Players
U7	Mini	6' x 8'	3	5	4
U8	Mini	6' x 8'	3	5	4
U9	1/3	6' x 12'	4	7	5
U10	1/3	6' x 12'	4	7	5
U11	1/2	6.5' x 18'	4	9	6
U12	1/2	6.5' x 18'	4	9	6
U14	Full	8' x 24'	5	11	7
U18	Full	8' x 24'	5	11	7
U35	Full	8' x 24'	5	11	7

An official match may not be played without a suitable goal frame. Whenever possible, goal netting shall be used, but matches may proceed without netting.

Law 3. Players and Substitutions

The maximum number of players permitted and the minimum number required for each division are outlined in the chart above.

No team may field more than one player in excess of their opponent, except in situations where a team has had one or more players sent off.

In U7-U10, if a team is losing by three or more goals, the coach is permitted to add an additional player to the field. This is optional and will not be enforced by the referee/game leader.

In U7-U12, coaches may switch their players while play is ongoing (i.e. on the fly) and/or while play is stopped. The coach does not need to ask the referee/game leader for permission to execute a substitution, and the referee/game leader will only allow a very short pause for any substitutions conducted at a stoppage.

For U13-U20, substitutions may only be made at a stoppage in play and with the referee's permission. Coaches may ask for a substitution on their team's throw-in, corner kick or free kick, after an injury, or on either team's goal kick. Players may not enter or leave the field of play unless or until the referee allows the substitution. Once one team has legally initiated a substitution, the other team is automatically allowed to substitute as well. Substitutes can take any restart provided they enter the field of play prior to the restart.

Substitutions are permitted at half-time, without the referee's permission.

Law 4. Equipment and Uniforms

Basic compulsory equipment consists of shorts, team socks, shin guards, acceptable footwear, and a numbered jersey. Goalkeepers must wear colours that are distinguishable from all other players and the referee/game leader. The goalkeeper may wear a baseball cap to shield his/her eyes from the sun.

Players will not be permitted to play without shin guards under any circumstances. Long-sleeved garments may be worn, but only underneath the team jersey. In cases of extreme inclement weather, players may wear full-length leg coverings, provided that they are tucked into the socks and do not, in the opinion of the referee/game leader, pose a hazard. Hoods must be tucked into players' jerseys.

The referee/game leader reserves the right to inspect anything worn by a player. If they determine any items worn by a player to be dangerous or pose a hazard to other players, they will instruct the player to remove it. Players shall not wear anything that, in the opinion of the referee/game leader, endangers themselves or other players, such as hard plaster casts.

Jewellery (including earrings, bracelets, necklaces and rings) may not be worn on the field of play. Medic Alert bracelets are permitted, and stud earrings may be covered by tape at the referee/game leader's discretion if they cannot be removed. Loose, dangling, or hoop earrings of any kind must be removed. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

Soft, lightweight casts or knee/arm protectors (braces) are permitted if they, in the opinion of the referee/game leader, do not present a danger to the individual or any other player. Casts/braces containing any metal are not permitted.

Any support device must be safe for all players, and adequately padded and covered if necessary. Plastic or metallic hair bands may not be worn.

Eyeglasses may only be worn if the referee/game leader is satisfied that they do not pose a hazard to the wearer or any other player. In U14 and older divisions, eyeglasses must include a securely attached safety strap to keep glasses affixed to the wearer. For safety, the wearing of sports goggles in place of potentially hazardous eyewear is highly encouraged.

A player who is asked to leave the field of play because of defective or dangerous equipment may not re-enter the field of play until the referee/game leader is satisfied that the equipment is permissible, and with the referee/game leader's permission.

Law 5. The Referee and Law 6. Other Match Officials

U7-U8: Each match is led by a certified game leader whose duties include, but are not limited to: keeping time for the games, ensuring player safety, implementing simplified rules while limiting stoppages, assisting players with all restarts, and promoting a fun and rewarding experience.

U9+: Each match is officiated by an Ontario Soccer certified referee whose duties include, but are not limited to: enforcing the Laws of the Game; issuing cautions and dismissals; keeping time and score for the match (in divisions that record scores); starting, stopping and re-starting play; and suspending or terminating a match if circumstances warrant.

Decisions will be made to the best of the referee/game leader's ability according to the Laws of the Game and in the 'spirit of the game', and will be based on the opinion of the referee/game leader who has the discretion to take appropriate action within the framework of the Laws of the Game.

The referee/game leader may not change a decision upon realizing that it is incorrect, if play has restarted or if the referee/game leader has signaled the end of the first or second half and left the field of play or terminated the match. All decisions made by the referee/game leader with regards to the match are final.

The referee/game leader will stop play if a player is, in his/her opinion, seriously injured and allow them to be treated, and ensure that any player who is bleeding leaves the field and does not return until the bleeding has stopped, any wound is adequately covered and any blood-stained clothing has been removed. The referee/game leader will allow play to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in his/her opinion does not require immediate attention.

The referee/game leader is authorized to take action against coaches and team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and, at his/her discretion, expel them from the field of play and its vicinity, and will report to the Club Head Referee any disciplinary action taken against any players and/or coaches, and any incidents occurring before, during or after a match.

In some matches in U14-U20, one or more assistant referee may be present, whose duties will include providing assistance to the referee. The assistant referees operate under the direction of the referee. Coaches, players and spectators are required to provide adequate space for the assistant referee to run the sideline. The referee, at his/her discretion, may caution or send off any player for an incident seen only by an assistant referee.

Law 7. Duration of Matches

The U7-U12 divisions follow a game-activity-activity-game (or GAAG) system. Kick-off occurs promptly at the start of the hour. These games are played continuously, without a halftime.

Breakdown	Game 1	Activities 1+2	Game 2
U7-U8	15 minutes	25 minutes	15 minutes
U9-U10	18 minutes	20 minutes	18 minutes
U11-U12	18 minutes	20 minutes	18 minutes

In U7-U8, the activity session is led by game leaders and volunteer coaches.

In U9-U10, the activity session is led by game leaders and volunteer coaches, with assistance from the referee.

In U11-U12, the activity session is led by a development coach.

In U14+, the game is divided into two 25 minute halves, with a 5-minute halftime.

In U11-U20, teams switch ends at halftime.

The game structure may change toward the end of the regular season and during the festival/finals weekend, at the discretion of NTSC.

A match may be shortened or abandoned if, in the opinion of the referee/game leader, the field has become unfit for play or if weather conditions pose a danger to players (e.g. electrical storm).

A match is official once halftime has been reached or if the equivalent of half of the allotted game time has been played. If a match is abandoned due to weather or field conditions once it is official, the score will be recorded as it stood at the time the match was abandoned. If a match is abandoned before becoming official, no score will be recorded, and the match will be excluded from the final standings.

In playoff matches for divisions in which scores are kept, the following tie-breaking procedure applies:

- One 5 minute 'golden goal' extra time period is played. If either team scores during this period, the match is over and they are declared the winners. A coin toss before extra time will be conducted to give the winner of the toss the choice of which half to defend. No substitutions are permitted during overtime except to address player injuries.
- If neither team scores during extra time, kicks from the penalty mark will occur. Each team selects any five players, who alternate taking penalty kicks on the opposing team's goalkeeper. The shootout is over when one team is mathematically defeated. Any player may be selected as goalkeeper, but must remain as goalkeeper for the duration of the shootout, barring injury.
- If the match is still tied after each team has taken five kicks, each team selects one additional player to take a kick. The process continues until one team has scored more goals than the opponent after the same number of kicks. No player may take an additional kick until all of their teammates have taken the same number of kicks. If a team expends its entire roster without the tie being broken, players may begin taking second kicks, in any order.

Law 8. The Start and Restart of Play

Opposing players must provide 6 yards of distance in U7-U10, 8 yards of distance in U11-U12, and 10 yards of distance in U14+ on all restarts, with the exception of kick-ins (see Law 15), until the ball is in play. If a player encroaches, the referee/game leader may stop play, direct that the restart be retaken and, at their discretion, show a yellow card (U9+, see Law 12).

On all starts and restarts, except for a dribble-in, the player who takes the start/restart may not touch the ball a second time until it has been played by another player, otherwise a free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

A coin toss determines possession to begin the game. In U7-U10, the team winning the coin toss chooses whether to kick off to start the first or second game. In U11+, the team winning the coin toss chooses which goal to attack in the first half/game, and takes the second half/game kick-off. The other team takes the first half/game kick-off.

The kick-off is used to start play at the beginning of each half/game, at the beginning of extra-time, and to restart play after a goal has been scored (by the team that has been scored against). The ball must be stationary at the centre mark and is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves.

The player taking the kick is permitted to stand in the opponent's half at the kick-off.

In situations not covered by any other method of restart, the ball will be dropped by the referee/game leader and is in play once it has touched the ground.

Law 9. Ball In And Out Of Play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed a sideline or goal line on the ground or in the air, or when the referee/game leader has stopped play.

The ball is considered in play at all other times, including when it has contacted any goalpost, crossbar, corner flag, pylon or other object used by the NTSC to mark the active field of play, or the referee/game leader.

When any person other than an active player or the referee/game leader touches the ball while in play, the referee/game leader will stop play and restart with a dropped ball, unless the referee/game leader determines the interference was intentional, in which case a free kick against the offending team may be awarded.

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball, while in play, has passed entirely over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no offense of the Laws of the Game has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal. If an offense has occurred, the goal is negated, and play is restarted accordingly.

Law 10. Determining the Outcome of a Match

In divisions where scores are kept, a 1-0 default win is awarded to the opposing team if a team is, at any point in the match, unable to field the minimum (with the exception of players temporarily sidelined due to injury). If neither team is able to field the minimum at any point, both teams are assigned a default loss.

In U9+, When extenuating circumstances exist, the referee may allow a grace period of five minutes after the scheduled kickoff time if one team is one or two players short of reaching the minimum.

In U9+, if a team fields more than the maximum while the ball is in play, the referee will stop play, award an indirect free kick to the opposing team, and may show a yellow card to any player who entered the field without permission. If, before play is restarted, a team is discovered to have scored a goal while fielding above the maximum, the goal is negated and play is restarted with a direct free kick. If, after a goal is scored and play has restarted, the referee realizes 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, and restart with a dropped ball or free kick as appropriate.

Law 11. Offside

Offside is enforced in U11-U20, as per the FIFA Laws of the Game.

A player is in an offside position if any part of the head, body, or feet are nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent. A player cannot be in an offside position in their own half of the field, and it is not an offence in itself to be in an offside position.

A player is adjudged to be offside if he/she is in an offside position and, at the moment the ball is played or touched by a teammate, is involved in active play by either interfering with play, interfering with an opponent or gaining an advantage.

Interfering with play means playing or touching a ball passed or touched by a teammate (with the exception of a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in). Interfering with an opponent means preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by obstructing the opponent's line of vision or movements. Gaining an advantage means playing a ball that rebounds off of a goalpost, crossbar, opponent, or match official. This includes a ball that rebounds off the goalkeeper or any player following a save or attempted save.

For any offside offence, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, to be taken from the spot where the offense occurred, including if it is in the player's own half of the field of play.

Detailed descriptions of additional situations relating to Law 11 can be found in the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 12. Fouls and Misconducts

Direct and indirect free kicks and penalty kicks can only be awarded for offenses and infringements committed when the ball is in play.

Indirect Free Kicks (all divisions): An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team when any player:

- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made
- Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his/her hands

- Plays a dead ball a second time before it has touched another player
- Commits any offense not previously mentioned in this Law for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player

Indirect free kicks are also awarded when a goalkeeper, inside his/her own penalty area:

- Controls the ball with his/her hands and takes more than six seconds to release it
- Releases the ball from his/her hands and handles it a second time before it has touched another player
- Handles the ball after it has been intentionally kicked or thrown back by a teammate
- Wastes time

Additionally, the referee/game leader may, at his/her discretion, award an indirect free kick if:

- A team is guilty of time-wasting while making substitutions
- Any substitute, coach or spectator interferes with play

Direct Free Kicks (U11-U20): A direct free kick is awarded when any player commits any of the following offenses in a manner judged by the referee to be careless, reckless or with excessive force:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges at an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles or challenges an opponent

A direct free kick will also result when any player:

- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Off-field offense between players, coaches, and/or match officials
- Kicks or throws an object into the field to interfere with play
- Kicks or throws the ball or other object at someone on the sideline
- Deliberately handles the ball (see Law 16)

In U11+, if a team against whom an offence is committed would, in the opinion of the referee, gain a greater advantage by having play continue than by having it stopped to award a free kick, the referee will award the advantage and signal for play to continue. If, after several seconds, the advantage does not materialize, the referee will stop play and award a free kick from the original spot of the offence. A player may be cautioned or sent off for an offence not originally punished by a free kick under the advantage rule.

Cautionable Offences: The referee will caution a player and show him/her a yellow card for any of the following offences:

- Unsporting behavior
- Showing dissent by word or action
- Persistently infringing the Laws of the Game
- Delaying the restart of play
- Failing to respect the required distance on a restart (i.e. free kick)
- Entering or leaving the field without the referee's permission
- Denying the opposing team a goal or obvious goal-scoring opportunity in an attempt to play the ball in the penalty area

Sending-Off Offences: A player will be shown the red card and ejected from the game for any of the following offences:

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct
- Spitting at an opponent or any other person
- Using offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures
- Denying the opposing team a goal or obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (excluding goalkeeper inside their own penalty area)
- Denying the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a foul against an opponent moving towards the player's goal
- Entering the field of play and without permission and stopping a goal or denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity
- Receiving two yellow cards in the same match

Any player who is sent off for serious foul play, violent conduct, spitting or using offensive language/gestures will be automatically suspended for the team's next match and may, pending disciplinary review, face further suspension based on the nature of the incident. NTSC may suspend any player who receives a red card, pending review.

Any player receiving three yellow cards in the same session will be suspended for one match, to be enforced within two games of the game in which the third yellow card is received. A player's accumulation of cautions is reset upon serving a suspension, or upon completion of the regular season.

If a team is found to be fielding a player under suspension, or an unregistered player, play is stopped, the opposing team is awarded a direct free kick, and the player and coach are sent off. Any player receiving more than one suspension in a season, and any coach found fielding an illegal player, will be subject to disciplinary review and may face further sanctions, including expulsion, at the discretion of NTSC.

In U7-U10, a player who is sent off may not return to the game but may be replaced by another player. In U11-U20, the team is required to continue the match with one less player.

Law 13. Free Kicks

For any offences committed while the ball is in play (see Law 12), the referee/game leader will stop play and award a free kick to the opposing team.

The ball must be stationary when the kick is taken, and all opposing players must be the required number of yards away (or on their own goal line, between the goal posts). The ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves.

Free kicks are either direct or indirect, depending on the nature of the stoppage in play. In U7-U10, all free kicks are indirect kicks.

A goal may be scored if a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal. If an indirect kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, no goal is scored, and a goal kick is awarded. If any free kick is kicked directly into a team's own goal, no goal is scored, and a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team. The referee/game leader will signal an indirect kick by raising his/her arm above his/her head and lowering it once the ball has touched a second player or gone out of play.

If a team is awarded a free kick inside their own goal area (U14+) or penalty area (U7-U12), the kick may be taken from any spot within the area, and is in play once it leaves the penalty area. If an indirect free kick is awarded within the opponent's goal area (U11 and above), the kick is taken from the edge of the goal area, nearest to the spot of the offense.

Law 14. The Penalty Kick

A penalty kick is awarded against a team that commits one of the 10 fouls for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play. **New for 2019 – no PKs in U7-U8. If a foul occurs around the goal area, move the ball back at least 6 six yards from the opponent's goal, and award an indirect free kick to the team that was fouled.**

The ball is placed at a spot between the goal posts and the appropriate distance from the goal line:

U9-U10: six yards

U11-U12: eight yards

U14-U20: twelve yards

Any active player from the attacking team may take the kick. All players, with the exception of the player taking the kick and the defending goalkeeper, shall be outside the penalty area but within the field of play, behind the ball and at least the required distance away from the ball until it is in play.

The goalkeeper must stay on his/her goal line, between the goal posts and facing the field of play until the ball is in play. Players may not make any sound or movements that, in the opinion of the referee, are intended as a distraction. The ball is in play once the referee has signaled the kick may be taken, the ball is kicked and moves forward. The player taking the kick may not touch the ball a

second time until it has touched another player.

For any offense of this Law:

- By a member of the defending team, the kick is retaken if a goal is not scored. If a goal is scored, it stands.
- By a member of the attacking team, if a goal is scored it is negated and the kick is retaken. If a goal is not scored, play is stopped and an indirect free kick is awarded to the defending team from the spot of the offense.
- By members of both teams, if no goal is scored, the kick is retaken and both players are cautioned. If a goal is scored, the kick is recorded as 'missed' and the kicker is cautioned. If the penalty kick is awarded during the match, play is restarted with an indirect free kick for the defending team

Law 15. The Throw-in, Kick-in and Dribble-in

When the whole of the ball passes over the sideline, either on the ground or in the air, play is stopped and restarted with a kick-in or dribble-in (U7-U10) or throw-in (U11-U20). The restart is to be taken by a member of the team opposing that of the player who last touched the ball from the spot where the ball went out of play.

In U7-U10, the player taking a kick-in or dribble-in may kick the ball from either on or behind the sideline, or they may dribble the ball back onto the field of play. Opponents must remain 5 yards away until the ball is in play.

In U11+, the player taking a throw-in, at the moment of delivering the ball, must face the field of play, have part of both feet on or behind the sideline, use both hands, and deliver the ball from behind and over his/her head. The ball is in play once it enters the field of play. Opponents must remain two yards away until the ball is in play.

In U11-U12, the referee may award a second attempt by the same player when the throw-in is not done correctly. In U14+ (or for a U11-U12 player attempting a second throw-in) play is stopped and the opposing team is awarded a throw-in from the same spot when the throw-in is executed incorrectly.

A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-in or throw-in, but **in U7-U10, a goal may be scored from a dribble in if the player taking the restart has taken more than one touch on the ball before it enters the goal. The ball is not required to touch another player before entering the goal.**

Law 16. The Goal Kick

When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, excluding that portion between the goal posts, having last been played or touched by a member of the attacking team, a goal kick shall be awarded to the defending team. The ball shall be kicked into play from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team. If the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team if the ball left the penalty area.

In U7-U12, all opposing players must stand behind the designated 'Retreat Line' until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it is kicked out of the penalty area and either touches a defending teammate or goes beyond the Retreat Line. (see Retreat Line section for details)

In U14+, all opposing players must remain outside of the penalty area. The ball is in play once it is kicked directly out of the penalty area. An attacker entering the penalty area cannot play or challenge for the ball until it's played by a second player on the defending team.

A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.

Law 17. The Corner Kick

When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, excluding that portion between the goal posts, having last been played or touched by a member of the defending team, a corner-kick shall be awarded to the attacking team.

The ball is placed within the arc of the nearest corner. The flag post may not be moved. All opponents must remain the required distance away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team. If the ball directly enters the kicker's goal a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Additional NTSC Laws/Clarifications

1. Ball Handling

A player may not deliberately touch a ball in play with his/her hand or any part of his/her arm ('handle the ball'), except for a goalkeeper inside his/her penalty area.

In U7-U12, when the goalkeeper has taken control of a ball in play, inside his/her own penalty, all opposing players must move behind the designated Retreat Line until the ball is released by the goalkeeper and is either touched by a teammate or goes beyond the retreat line.

In all divisions, the goalkeeper may not handle the ball if it has been deliberately played to them by a teammate's foot or throw-in. If the goalkeeper handles the ball inside his/her own penalty area after it has been deliberately played to them by a teammate's foot or throw-in, the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick from the location of the offense.

The referee/game leader, in determining whether the ball has been deliberately handled, will consider the movement of the hand towards the ball, the distance between the opponent and the ball when it was kicked, and the speed at which the ball moved. The position of the player's hand does not necessarily mean there is an offense.

2. The Retreat Line

Divisions U7-U12 use the 'retreat line', a component of the game intended to improve skill, and to be enforced during a) goal kicks and b) when the goalkeeper receives the ball during play.

U7-U8: Retreat line is the halfway line.

U9-U12: Retreat line is a third of the way up the field.

The retreat line shall be indicated with pylons on either side of the field and the referee/game leader shall assist players in recognizing it.

Goal Kicks (ball out of play): Before the kick is taken, opposing players must stand behind the designated "retreat line" until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it is kicked out of the penalty area and either touches a defending teammate, or goes beyond the retreat line. For any infraction by the opposing team, play is stopped and goal kick is retaken.

Goalkeeper handles the ball (during active play): When the goalkeeper has taken control of a ball in play, inside his/her own penalty area, all opposing players must move behind the designated "retreat line" until the ball is released by the goalkeeper and is either touched by a teammate or goes beyond the retreat line. For any infraction by the opposing team, play is stopped and a free kick is awarded to the defending team from the location of the ball when play was stopped.

The goalkeeper may elect to play the ball quickly, before opponents have reached the retreat line. In this case, play continues. For any infraction by the opposing team, play is stopped and the defending team is awarded an indirect free kick from where the infraction occurred.

3. Coaches and Spectators

No coach or spectator may enter the field of play at any time without the permission of the referee/game leader, with one exception: in the first game in divisions using the game-activity-game (GAG) format, coaches may enter the field to provide instruction and direction to individual players, but must not interfere with active play.

All coaches, substitutes, and spectators must provide adequate distance along all sidelines; may not be within five yards of, or behind, either goal; and may not interfere with any ball in play. Spectators will be asked to position themselves on the opposite sideline from coaches and substitutes.

In U7-U12, coaches and substitutes will position themselves in the designated space between fields. One coach is permitted behind the goal line to assist the goalkeeper.

In U14+, coaches must not position themselves on a sideline that is shared by two fields, and must not position themselves in such a way that interferes with the game. Coaches must remain in the half with their team's bench, not to cross the

halfway line. The referee/game leader is the final authority on where coaches and spectators may position themselves, and is authorized to abandon the match, or expel from the field and its vicinity any person who interferes with play or does not comply with the referee's instructions.

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