



**Texarkana Soccer Association  
Recreational League Laws of the Game 2026**

**TSA Recreational League  
Playing Laws**

Revised 2/23/26

**Referees of TUSA will follow the rules set forth by IFAB, FIFA, US Soccer, USSF and these local laws, TSA laws take precedence.**

## *TSA Modifications to the Laws*

### **U-5/6**

#### **Intentionally heading the ball is not allowed**

**Coaches are allowed on the field to position players before restarts but must return to sideline before play begins**

**Coaches are allowed to range from the goal line to the halfway line on the half of the field adjacent to their team bench**

**Goalkeepers are not allowed**

**Goals cannot be scored directly from kickoffs**

**All free kicks are direct kicks**

**Kick ins replace throw ins on restarts from the touch lines**

**Slide tackles are not allowed**

### **U-7/8**

#### **Intentionally heading the ball is not allowed**

**Coaches are not allowed to enter the field of play without permission from the referee**  
**Players are not allowed to enter, re-enter or deliberately leave the field of play without the referee's permission**

**Coaches are allowed to range from the goal line to the halfway line on the half of the field adjacent to their team bench**

**Goalkeepers are not allowed**

**No player may touch the ball within the goal box.**

**If an offensive player touches the ball within the goal box, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team**

**If a defensive player touches the ball within the goal box a penalty kick is awarded to the offensive team.**

**If the ball stops in the goal box a goal kick is awarded to the defense.**

**Penalty kicks are direct kicks taken from the top of the center circle on the offensive side of the midfield line with all players other than the player taking the kick behind the midfield line.**

**If a goal is not scored on a penalty kick, the defensive team is awarded a goal kick.**

**Penalty kicks are not live balls.**

**Goal kicks may be taken from any point on the end line that is outside of the goal box. Opponents must be at least five yards away.**

**If a foul is called on the defensive team nearer than five yards from their goal box the ball is placed five yards from the goal box in line with the spot of the foul.**

**Goals can not be scored directly from kickoffs.**

**All free kicks other than corner kicks and penalty kicks are indirect kicks.**

**Slide tackles are not allowed**

## **U-9/10, 11/12**

### **Intentionally heading the ball is not allowed**

**Coaches are not allowed to enter the field of play without permission from the referee**

**Players are not allowed to enter, re-enter or deliberately leave the field of play without the referee's permission**

**Coaches are allowed to range from the penalty area top line (eighteen-yard line) to the halfway line on the half of the field adjacent to their team bench**

## **FIELD AND GAME PROCEDURES FOR TEAMS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS:**

The goal of TUSA is to promote fair play and good sporting behavior

1. In case of unsporting behavior by coaches and/or spectators (abusive behavior towards referees, players, coaches or spectators), the referee has the option to send anyone off the field, which includes the spectator side and the general vicinity of the field, or the referee may choose to ABANDON THE MATCH!
2. Spectators and parents shall remain on the designated spectator's side of the field and at least 2 yards from the touch line or behind the spectator line, if present.  
Spectators are not allowed behind the goal line.
3. Coaches are required to have their coaches credentials (coaching card on lanyard) in plane view during games. Coaches are not allowed behind the goal line. In U-9 and above divisions Coaches are allowed to range from the penalty area top line (eighteen-yard line) to the halfway line on the half of the field adjacent to their team bench. Teams are limited to a maximum of three team staff members on the team side of the field. One coach and one assistant coach per team may coach from the coach's area. Each team may also have a team manager on or behind the bench. No other persons are allowed on the team side of the field. Failure to abide by this restriction can result in disciplinary action against the head coach,
4. Any unsporting behavior before, during or after a game, when brought to the Board's attention, will be turned over to the Disciplinary Committee for disposition.
5. Any coach (or other team staff member) that was required to leave the field of play by a referee shall not be allowed to coach in the team's next scheduled game. If the referee recommends additional disciplinary action of the coach, the issue will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee prior to the Team's next scheduled game. The coach will be advised as quickly as possible of any subsequent discipline deemed necessary by the committee. The coach has the right to appeal all disciplinary actions, including the initial game suspension, but must do so at least 48 hours before the team's next scheduled game, or within 12 hours of the issuance of the discipline if issued less than 48 hours prior to the team's next scheduled game.

## **FORFEITURE OF MATCH RULES (Score for forfeited match shall be 3 – 0)**

1. The ball must be put into play within 10 minutes after the scheduled start time. If the match is not started within this time frame without good cause, the referee will declare the match abandoned. TUSA will award the win to the team that was on time.
2. If the minimum number of players required by their division to start a match are not present the referee will abandon the match. TUSA will award the win to the team with the required number of players present. (TUSA wants players to be able to play if they come to the field for their scheduled game. Should the other team be short of players or does not arrive, at the request of the present coach the referee will get pinnies from the referee storeroom and divide the players present into two equal teams and play a match. Forfeiture rule will apply to the team short of players)
3. A consistent showing of poor sportsmanship by a team, a coach, an assistant coach or parents of a team towards another team or referee, will result in abandonment of the match by the referee. When a match is abandoned, the match shall be considered a forfeit and shall not be rescheduled. This violation will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee to determine if additional action is required.
4. If a coach pulls his team from the field during the match without the referee's permission, it shall be considered that the match has been abandoned. Therefore, forfeited.

## **Law 1 The Field of Play**

The field of play shall be rectangular, consisting of longer lines – touchlines and perpendicular shorter lines – goal lines.

A halfway line shall be marked across the field, equidistant from the goal lines and parallel to them.

The center of the field shall be marked by a spot or an X.

Goals shall be placed on the goal line; the rear of the goal posts shall be even with the outer edge of the goal line.

Note: All markings are part of the area they enclose.

Other field markings by age group are:

### **U-5/6**

Field Dimensions: 30 yards in length x 20 yards in width

Goals: 4ft. x 6ft.

Markings: A center circle with a 3-yard radius. Four corner arcs each with a 2ft. radius.

Goal Area: Two yards from each goal post and two yards into the field of play.

Penalty Area: A 6-yard radius semicircle extending from the center of the goal

### **U-7/8**

Field Dimensions: 40 yards in length x 30 yards in width

Goals: 4ft. x 8ft.

Markings: A center circle with a 5-yard radius. Four corner arcs each with a 2ft. radius.

Goal Area: Ten ft. wide x eight ft. Deep directly in front of the goal.

### **U-9/10, U-11/12 with 7 or 8 player teams**

Field Dimensions: 70 yards in length x 50 yards in width

Goals: 6ft. x 18ft.

Markings: A center circle with an 8-yard radius. Four corner arcs each with a 2ft. radius.

A different colored Build out Line running from touchline to touchline halfway between the edge of the penalty area and the halfway line on both sides of the field

Goal Area: Six yards from each goal post and six yards into the field of play.

Penalty Area: Fourteen yards from each goal post and fourteen yards into the field of play

Penalty Spot: Eight yards into the field of play from the center of the goal line.

Penalty Arc: Is a restraining line for penalty kicks drawn outside the penalty area at an 8-yard radius from the center of the penalty kick line

### **U-11/12 (Also U-14 & Above Small Sided Games)**

Field Dimensions: 90 yards in length x 60 yards in width

Goals: 8ft. x 24ft.

Markings: A center circle with a 10-yard radius. Four corner arcs each with a 3ft. radius.

Goal Area: Six yards from each goal post and six yards into the field of play.

Penalty Area: Eighteen yards from each goal post and eighteen yards into the field of play

Penalty Spot: Twelve yards into the field of play from the center of the goal line.

Penalty Arc: Is a restraining line for penalty kicks drawn outside the penalty area at a 10-yard radius from the center of the penalty kick line

## **U-14 & Above**

Field Dimensions: 105 yards in length x 70 yards in width

Goals: 8ft. x 24ft.

Markings: A center circle with a 10-yard radius. Four corner arcs each with a 3ft. radius.

Goal Area: Six yards from each goal post and six yards into the field of play.

Penalty Area: Eighteen yards from each goal post and eighteen yards into the field of play

Penalty Spot: Twelve yards into the field of play from the center of the goal line.

Penalty Arc: Is a restraining line for penalty kicks drawn outside the penalty area at a 10-yard radius from the center of the penalty kick line

**TUSA may change the size of the field in divisions where enrollment may require modification. Field markings will be in accordance with FIFA and USYSA rules.**

# **Law 2      The Ball**

TUSA will provide game balls. Players and coaches shall provide soccer balls for warm up as needed.

The ball shall be inflated to the manufacturer's recommended pressure. If the ball becomes deflated during play, it is declared dead where it was last played and the match is resumed with a drop ball at the spot where it was last played.

Ball sizes are as follows:

1. U5 through U8 divisions will play with size 3 ball.
2. U9 through U12 divisions will play with size 4 ball.
3. U14 & above age divisions will play with size 5 ball

# Law 3      The Players

## A. Player Eligibility

1. Each Player must be fully registered with a specific Texarkana Soccer League to participate in that league. That league registration shall include appropriate registration with state and United States Soccer governing bodies.
2. Players must be paid in full or the player must have been approved for scholarship assistance before being placed on a roster.
3. Players must be in good standing with the league to participate.
4. Parents of players must be in good standing with the league for their child to participate.
5. Players may only play for the Texarkana Soccer team in which they are officially rostered.
6. No guest players are allowed to play in the Texarkana United Soccer Association's recreation league.
7. Players must play in their official United States Soccer assigned age group unless formal request is approved by Texarkana United Soccer Association.
8. Players may not be rostered on more than one team (dual rostered) during a season to participate in a Texarkana United Soccer Association's league (recreational or competitive). Texarkana United Soccer Association has the right to remove any players from their recreation or competitive team that are found to be dual rostered.

All persons/teams registering to participate in the League agree to accept and abide by the League rules and policies and any decisions made by the league administrators. Lack of knowledge of these rules will not relieve any coach, team official, parent or player of a team participating in the league or seeking entry into the league, from the responsibilities and rules of the league.

All coaches, team officials, parents and players participating in the League agree that they are bound by these rules. All the rules for “The League” will be posted on the Texarkana Soccer Association’s website.

## **B. Number of Players**

**Each team coach shall have with them at all games a roster listing the names and numbers of all players and the names of all coaches**

The number of players for each age division is as follows:

9. U5 and U6 play 3 a side with NO GOALKEEPER
10. U7 and U8 play 4 a side with NO GOALKEEPER
11. U9 and U10 play 7 a side including a goalkeeper. (May start with min. of 5 players)
12. U11 and U12 play 9 a side including a goalkeeper. (May start with min. of 7 players)
13. U14 plays 11 a side including a goalkeeper. (May start with min. of 7 players)
14. Scholastic (U18 Fall) plays 7 a side including a goalkeeper (May start with min. of 5 players)
15. In U/10 and older leagues each team must have a (one) captain who wears an identifying armband (on their arm).

TUSA may change the number of players per side in divisions where enrollment and/or field size is an issue. U12, U14 and above divisions may be formed as Co-Ed depending on enrollment.

## **C. Substitutions**

A substitute who desires to enter the match shall go to the touch line at the halfway line and stand one yard back from the touch line. To be eligible for substitution; the substitute must be at the halfway line before the substitution opportunity occurs. The substitute may only enter the match when the player he/she is replacing is called off the field and the referee beckons him/her onto the field. (Wait for the Referee to give permission) The player being substituted **may** leave the field at the nearest point on the touchline/goal line. The substitute may only enter the field of play at the halfway line.

1. Either team may substitute unlimited players from the bench or the halfway line:
  - a. After a goal is scored.
  - b. A substitution break called by the referee to ensure equal playing time
  - c. On a goal kick.
2. The team in possession of the ball may substitute unlimited players from the half line on their own throw in.
3. Injured player(s) may be substituted. If the injured player is substituted, either team may substitute an unlimited number of player(s) from the halfway line.
4. Cautioned players may be substituted. If the cautioned player is substituted, either team may substitute an unlimited number of one player(s) from the halfway line.
5. Substitutions are NOT allowed on corner kicks
6. Substitutions are NOT allowed on free kicks
7. Change of goalkeeper must be approved by the referee
8. Entry onto the field of play by a substitute is prohibited without the approval of the referee.

## Law 4      The Players' Equipment

Each Coach shall be responsible for arranging the procurement of uniforms for their team. **The color of the uniform and the team's name must be approved by the commissioner of that team's division.** Every child is required to wear a uniform in order to play.

The required player equipment includes a uniform consisting of a jersey, (sleeveless jerseys are allowed) shorts, socks, suitable shoes and age-appropriate shin-guards. The jerseys shall all be of the same color and have a different number at least 6 inches tall on the back of each one. (In cold weather a sweater without a hood may be worn under the jersey – team jersey with number must be visible!) In cold weather a soft knit hat or soft

knit head band may be worn – no hats with bills or rims are allowed. Team Shorts shall all be of the same color. (Athletic pants are allowed in cold weather). Team Socks must all be the same color and shall be worn over the shin-guards, completely covering the shin-guards. Soccer style shoes are recommended but not required.

The jerseys of the opposing team shall be of a distinctively different color. When colors are similar, the home team will wear cover jerseys (pinnies) over their team jerseys. (TUSA has pinnies available at the supply room) The jersey of the goalkeeper must be a different color from that of his teammates and that of the opponents and should be numbered. The goalkeeper may wear protective goalkeeper gloves.

The following are illegal equipment and not allowed:

1. Projecting metal or other hard plates or projections on clothing or person, including artificial limbs or braces
2. Knee, head, arm, thigh or hip pads containing fiber, metal or any other unyielding material.
3. Helmets, except those specifically designed for soccer and made of soft material
4. Shin-guards that have been damaged, broken or have sharp edges.
5. Shoes with a toe cleat that points outward from the front of the shoe, such as a baseball shoe cleat
6. Shoes with metal or metal tipped cleats
7. Shoes with cleats that slant or point out toward the side instead of straight down
8. All jewelry including watches, rings, any type of earrings (or other body piercings), necklaces of any kind, bracelets of any kind or any other adornments and objects that could cause injury to themselves or others. (medical alert necklaces may be worn under jersey as long as it is taped securely to the body) New piercings should not be done before soccer season begins; all piercings must be removable for games and practices.
9. Hair barrettes, bobby pins and any other hair adornment made of metal or hard material

Note: A brace or cast may be worn if it is covered and padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than ½ inch thick. No projections or sharp edges shall be exposed. The player and coach must have the referee's approval before the game begins. The referee's decision is final

# Law 5      The Referee

The Referee's authority begins when they enter the field area and ends when they leave.

The Referee shall be responsible for:

## Game Time:

Time will be kept on the field by the referee (time will only be stopped for quarter time and halftime)

## Score Keeping:

Score will be kept on the field by the referee

## Examination of Equipment

It is mandatory that the referee of each game examines the equipment of each player before the game is played to ensure that the equipment complies with TUSA rules.

## Coin Toss

The referee will conduct a coin toss 5 minutes before game time. Team captains from opposing teams will participate. The away team calls the toss. **the team that wins** the toss of a coin 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

## Whistle

All play is to stop when the referee sounds (blows) their whistle

In the event that the referee sounds the whistle inadvertently, play will be restarted with a dropped ball.

The whistle is needed to:

1. Start play (first and second half of normal play and extra time), after a goal
2. Stop play:
  - a. For a free kick or penalty kick
  - b. For a caution or sending-off
  - c. For an injury
  - d. For a substitution
  - e. If the match is suspended or abandoned
  - f. At the end of each half (with three bursts)
3. Restart play for:
  - a. Free kicks when the appropriate distance is required
  - b. Penalty kicks
4. Restart play after it has been stopped for a:
  - a. Caution or sending-off
  - b. Injury
  - c. Substitution

The whistle is NOT needed to:

1. Stop play for an obvious:
  - a. Goal kick
  - b. Corner kick
  - c. Throw-in
  - d. Goal
2. Restart play from:
  - a. Most free kicks
  - b. Goal kicks
  - c. Corner kicks
  - d. Throw ins
  - e. Drop ball

# Law 6 The Other Match Officials

The assistant referees shall assist the referee:

Before Play:

1. Insure that corner flags are properly placed
2. Inspect all players for proper equipment

During Play:

1. Indicate when the ball leaves the field of play:
  - a. the whole ball crossing the touchline
  - b. the whole ball crossing the goalline
2. Indicate when offside has occurred
3. Indicate when substitutions are requested

On occasions where the referee has fewer than 2 assistant referees available, the referee can recruit the necessary number of volunteers (club linesmen) from the spectators to hold a flag and assist the referee by observing when the ball goes out of play only; all other calls will be made exclusively by the referee.

# Law 7 The Duration of the Match

## 1. Length of periods

- |                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| a. U5 & U6       | 4 – 8 - minute quarters  |
| b. U7 & U8       | 4 - 12 - minute quarters |
| c. U9 & U10      | 2 - 25 - minute halves   |
| d. U11 & U12     | 2 - 30 - minute halves   |
| e. U14 & above   | 2 - 35 - minute halves   |
| f. (small sided) | 2 - 30 - minute halves   |

## 2. Intervals between periods

- a. The halftime interval shall be 10 minutes.
- b. Matches with quarter shall also have a 2-minute break after 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters

## 3. Required Playing Time

- a. ALL PLAYERS MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH MATCH, unless a player is injured or absent from the match. A Coach may reduce the 50% required playing time by a reasonable amount if that player has missed more than 30 minutes of practice during the preceding week. This is to be determined on a week-by-week basis and penalties are not to be carried into subsequent weeks if practice attendance is corrected. A Coach must report any such reduction of playing time to the player's parent or guardian prior to the start of the game. If a Coach must penalize a player's playing time more than 2 times in a season, the coach must report this issue to the division commissioner.
- b. In matches with halves, the referee may stop play close to the midway point of each half to allow substitutions. This is to ensure that each player plays as close to 50% of the match as possible. In the interests of player safety, competition rules may allow, in certain weather conditions (e.g. high humidity and temperatures), 'cooling' breaks (from ninety seconds to three minutes) to allow the body's temperature to fall; they are different from 'drinks' breaks (maximum one minute) which are for rehydration

# Law 8                    The Start and Restart of Play

## Kickoff

1. The ball shall be placed on the center mark of the halfway line. When the referee signals with a sound of the whistle, a kick-off shall initiate play at the start of each period and after each goal.
2. At the moment of the kickoff, all players except the player taking the kick-off shall be in their team's half of the field. Players opposing the kicker shall be outside the center circle in their team's side of the field until the ball is kicked. (re-kick if not observed)
3. The ball must be kicked and visibly move (in any direction) to be in play (if not properly put in play, the kick is retaken). U9 through U18 a goal may be scored directly from a kickoff. U5 through U8 a goal may NOT be scored directly from a kickoff
4. The kicker may not touch the ball again until it is touched by another player.  
**Sanction: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.**
5. At the start of the second half of the match, teams shall change ends of the field, and the kick-off is taken by a player of the team opposite from the team that kicked off to start the first half of the match.

## Dropped Ball

1. The game is restarted with a dropped ball:
  - a. when the ball becomes deflated
  - b. Temporary Suspension: In case of a temporary stoppage of play such as injury, inadvertent whistle by the referee, outside interference or other cause, the game will be restarted with a dropped ball where play was stopped by the referee.
2. Procedure:

- a. If play is stopped inside the penalty area, or the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper
- b. If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the point of the last touch
- c. In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least 4m (4.5yds) away
- d. If the ball touches the referee (or another match official) and goes into the goal, team possession changes or a promising attack starts, a dropped ball is awarded
- e. The ball is in play when it touches the ground.
- f. If the ball is touched by a player before it touches the ground, the ball is not in play and will be dropped again.
- g. If a dropped ball is kicked into a player's own goal on first touch, play is restarted with a corner kick.
- h. If a dropped ball is kicked into a player's opponent's goal on first touch, play is restarted with a goal kick.

## **Law 9      The Ball In and Out of Play**

### Ball in and out of play

1. The ball is out of play when the whole ball has completely crossed a goal line or a touch line, whether on the ground or in the air.
2. The ball is in play at all other times, including:
  - a. when it rebounds from a goal post, crossbar or corner flag post
  - b. when it touched an official on the field of play
  - c. until a referee sounds the whistle
  - d. when a drop ball touches the ground
  - e. when a player who has left the field in the normal course of play plays the ball while it is still in the field of play

# Law 10 Determining the Outcome of a Match

## Goals

A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses over the entire goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar, provided it was not done by infringing the rules. After a goal is scored, the team that was scored against restarts play with a kick-off.

1. A goal may be scored directly from a:
  - a. Kick-off (except U5 through U8, these groups cannot score directly from a kick-off)
  - b. Direct free kick
  - c. Penalty kick
  - d. Corner Kick
  - e. Goalkeeper's punt or drop-kick
  - f. Goal kick into the opponent's goal.
  
2. A goal may NOT be scored directly from a/an:
  - a. Indirect free kick
  - b. Throw-in
  - c. Free kick into a team's own goal
  - d. Goal kick into a team's own goal
  - e. Corner kick into a team's own goal
  - f. Drop Ball
  - g. Goalkeeper's throw

## Determining League Standings

League standings are kept in the Fall Season only  
– No standings are kept in the Spring Season –

Score is not kept in U5 through U8 divisions.

Score for a forfeited game is 3 - 0

The following point system will be used to determine League Standings:

Win = 3 points

Tie = 1 point

Loss = 0 points

The following procedure is used as the tiebreaker:

a. Head-to-head record – if still tied, then

b. Head-to-head goal differential (no goal maximum) – if still tied, then

c. Goal differential for entire season (max of 3 goals per game) – if still tied, then

d. Total goals allowed for the season.

### **Awards (Fall Season Only)**

-Awards are not given in the Spring Season -

Participation awards will be given to all participants in U5, U6, U7 and U8

Awards for U9, U10, U11, U12, U14 and U18 divisions will be:

a. Awards given for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> place in divisions with 10 or more teams

b. Awards given for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place in divisions with 7 to 9 teams

c. Awards given for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> place in divisions with 4 to 6 teams

d. Awards given for 1<sup>st</sup> place in divisions with 3 or less teams

# Law 11 Offside

Note: There is No offside in small-sided games (U5 – U8) where there is no goalkeeper

1. A player is in an offside position when: He/she is in the opponent's half of the field and,
  - a. He/she is closer to the opponent's goal line than the ball and
  - b. He/she is closer to the opponent's goal line than at least two opponents (Note: He/she can be even with the second from the last opponent)
2. A player is penalized for offside if at the moment the ball is touched or played by one of his/her teammates and he/she is in an offside position and he/she
  - a. plays the ball or
  - b. is involved in active play. A player will be penalized for offside if the player comes from an offside position to an onside position to play the ball.
3. A player is involved in active play when:
  - a. He/she is interfering with play, or
  - b. He/she is interfering with an opponent, or
  - c. He/she is gaining an advantage by his/her position.

**Sanction: Indirect Free Kick from where the offence occurred**
4. A player is **NOT** offside if:
  - a. He/she is on his/her half of the field
  - b. He/she receives the ball directly from:
    - i. A Throw-in
    - ii. A Goal Kick
    - iii. A Corner Kick
  - c. He/she is merely in an offside position and is not involved in play

# Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct

Slide tackles are NOT allowed in age groups U-5 through U-8.

**SANCTION: Direct Free Kick**

**INTENTIONALLY HEADING THE BALL IS ILLEGAL FOR AGE GROUPS U5 – U11**

Players in U-11 programs and younger shall not engage in intentionally heading the ball, either in practice or in games. **SANCTION: Indirect Free Kick**

## **DIRECT FREE KICK**

A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:

- charges
- jumps at
- kicks or attempts to kick
- pushes
- strikes or attempts to strike (including head-butt)
- tackles or challenges
- trips or attempts to trip

If an offence involves contact, it is penalized by a direct free kick

- **Careless** is when a player shows a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge or acts without precaution. No disciplinary sanction is needed
- **Reckless** is when a player acts with disregard to, or consequences for an opponent and must be cautioned
- **Using excessive force** is when a player exceeds the necessary use of force and/or endangers the safety of an opponent and must be sent off

A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences:

- a handball offence (except for the goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- holds an opponent
- impedes an opponent with contact
- bites or spits at someone on the team lists or match official
- throws an object at the ball, an opponent or a match official, or makes contact with the ball with a held object

## Handling the ball

For the purposes of determining handball offences, the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit. Not every touch of a player's hand/arm with the ball is an offence.

It is an offence if a player:

- deliberately touches the ball with their hand/arm, including moving the hand/arm towards the ball
- touches the ball with their hand/arm when it has made their body unnaturally bigger
- scores in the opponents' goal
  - directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper
- immediately after the ball has touched their or a team-mate's hand/arm, even if accidental

## INDIRECT FREE KICK

An indirect free kick is awarded if a player:

- plays in a dangerous manner
- impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made
- is guilty of dissent, using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s) or other verbal offences
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from the hands or kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it
- commits any other offence, not mentioned in the Laws, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player

An indirect free kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

- controls the ball with the hand/arm for more than six seconds before releasing it
- touches the ball with the hand/arm after releasing it and before it has touched another player
- touches the ball with the hand/arm unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after:
  - it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate
  - receiving it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with the hand(s) when:

- the ball is between the hands or between the hand and any surface (e.g. ground, own body) or by touching it with any part of the hands or arms, except if the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper or the goalkeeper has made a save
- holding the ball in the outstretched open hand
- bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air

A goalkeeper cannot be challenged by an opponent when in control of the ball with the hand(s)

### **Playing in a dangerous manner**

Playing in a dangerous manner is any action that, while trying to play the ball, threatens injury to someone (including the player themselves) and includes preventing a nearby opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury.

A scissors or bicycle kick is permissible provided that it is not dangerous to an opponent.

### **Impeding the progress of an opponent without contact**

Impeding the progress of an opponent means moving into the opponent's path to obstruct, block, slow down or force a change of direction when the ball is not within playing distance of either player:

All players have a right to their position on the field of play; being in the way of an opponent is not the same as moving into the way of an opponent.

A player may shield the ball by taking a position between an opponent and the ball if the ball is within playing distance and the opponent is not held off with the arms or body. If the ball is within playing distance, the player may be fairly charged by an opponent.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The referee has the authority to take disciplinary action against players, substitutes and team officials. The Yellow card communicates a caution and the Red card communicates a sending off.

### **Cautionable offences**

A player or substitute is cautioned if guilty of:

- delaying the restart of play
- dissent by word or action
- unsporting behavior
- entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission

A player is cautioned if guilty of:

- deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission
- failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a dropped ball, corner kick, free kick or throw-in
- persistent offences [no specific number or pattern of offences constitute "persistent"]

Where two separate cautionable offences are committed (even in close proximity), they should result in two cautions

### **Cautions for unsporting behavior (yellow cards)**

There are different circumstances when a player must be cautioned for unsporting behavior, including if a player:

- attempts to deceive the referee, e.g. by feigning injury or pretending to have been fouled (simulation)
- changes places with the goalkeeper during play or without the referee's permission
- commits a direct free kick offence in a reckless manner
- handles the ball to interfere with or stop a promising attack (SPA) except where the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- commits any other offence which interferes with or stops a promising attack, except where the referee awards a penalty kick for an offence which was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball
- handles the ball in an attempt to score a goal (whether or not the attempt is successful) or in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent a goal
- makes unauthorized marks on the field of play
- plays the ball when leaving the field of play after being given permission to leave
- shows a lack of respect for the game

- verbally distracts an opponent during play or at a restart

## **Delaying the restart of play**

including if a player:

- appearing to take a throw-in but suddenly leaving it to a team-mate to take
- delaying leaving the field of play when being substituted
- excessively delaying a restart
- kicking or carrying the ball away, or provoking a confrontation by deliberately touching the ball after the referee has stopped play
- taking a free kick from the wrong position to force a retake

## **Sending-off offences (red cards)**

A player, substitute or substituted player who commits any of the following offences is sent off:

- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence outside their own penalty area
- denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick
- serious foul play
- biting or spitting at someone
- violent conduct using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
- receiving a second caution in the same match

## **Team officials**

Where an offence is committed and the offender cannot be identified, the senior team coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction.

## **Restart of play after fouls and misconduct**

If the ball is out of play, play is restarted according to the previous decision. If the ball is in play and a player commits a physical offence inside the field of play against

- an opponent - an indirect or direct free kick or penalty kick
- a team-mate, substitute, substituted or sent off player, team official or a match official - a direct free kick or penalty kick

All verbal offences are penalized with an indirect free kick

## MISCONDUCT

If a player is disqualified (red card) and sent off the field of play, the team cannot replace that player with a substitute and must play short a player. If a player on the bench is disqualified the team does not reduce the number of players on the field. The referee may require the disqualified player to leave the vicinity of the field if, in the opinion of the referee, the conduct warrants such action.

### PLAYER DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES:

Any player that is disqualified (Red Card) from a match will not be allowed to play in his Team's next scheduled match. If a referee recommends additional disciplinary action, the issue will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee within one week of the red card violation. The player and his coach will be advised of any subsequent discipline deemed necessary by the committee.

The player and his coach (or a team representative) may be required to appear before the Disciplinary Committee during its investigation of a Red Card violation against any player on that Team. The coach and the player involved in the violation will be given an opportunity to provide information on the violation to the Committee. The decision of this Committee is final and all such decisions cannot be appealed to the TUSA Board.

Any Player that receives a second Red Card during one season may be suspended for the remainder of the season. This violation will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee and a final decision will be issued.

If any player is issued a Red Card for any reasons, which are not clear violations of the Laws of the Game, such as the Team Captain being Red Carded because of unruly spectators harassing the Referee, the automatic one game suspension will

not apply. It will however, still be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee for corrective action.

#### VIOLATIONS OF LEAGUE RULES

It is the TUSA Board's duty to follow up on any reported violation of any Association Rules. The Disciplinary Committee shall conduct an investigation and present its findings to the Board, who shall take whatever action they deem necessary to enforce these rules.

#### PROCEDURE FOR A PROTEST

1. A coach may protest a game
2. The protest must be in writing and may be submitted to any TUSA board member. It must be accompanied by a fee of \$20.00 and in the hands of the Board member within 24 hours after the game.
3. If the protest is upheld, the \$40.00 will be returned to the coach. If the protest is
4. turned down, the \$40.00 fee will go into the TUSA general fund.
5. Coaches should use caution in making a formal protest. In all cases where the referee has made a judgment call, their decision will be upheld.

# Law 13 Free Kick

Note: For U5 through U6 age divisions, all free kicks are direct kicks

For U7 through U8 age divisions, all free kicks other than corner kicks and penalty kicks are indirect kicks.

1. A free kick is awarded to a team when a foul is committed by the opposing team.
2. The ball must be stationary before being put into play.
3. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
4. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it is touched by another player. **Sanction:** Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.
5. When there is a 'wall' of three or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1m (1 yd) of the wall; an attacker less than 1m (1yd) from the 'wall' when the kick is taken will be sanctioned with an indirect free kick
6. When the defending team takes a free kick in their own penalty area, the ball is in play once the kick is taken; it does not have to leave the penalty area before it can be played
7. U12 and above, players on the team opposing the kicker must be at least 10 yards away from the ball. Other distances from the ball by age group are:
  - a. U9 - U12 - 8 yards away from the ball
  - b. U7 - U8 - 5 yards away from the ball
  - c. U5 - U6 - 3 yards away from the ball
8. Indirect free kicks to the attacking team for an offence inside the opponent's goal area are taken from the nearest point on the goal area line which runs parallel to the goal line
9. Free kicks to the defending team in their goal area may be taken from anywhere in that area.

**DIRECT FREE KICK** - from which a goal may be scored directly, is awarded for the following infractions:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Recklessly charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent with hand and/or arms extended from the body
7. Makes contact with an opponent before making contact with the ball when tackling
8. Makes contact with an opponent when tackling from behind
9. Holds an opponent
10. Spits at an opponent
11. Deliberately plays the ball with the hands or arms (Exception for the goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area)

**INDIRECT FREE KICK** - from which a goal CANNOT be scored until the ball has been touched by another player from either team, is awarded for the following infractions:

1. Playing in a manner that the referee considers dangerous
2. Impedes the progress of an opponent (obstruction)
3. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball into play
4. Commits an offside offense
5. Commits any other offense, not mentioned, for which play is stopped
6. If the goalkeeper within his own penalty area:
  - a. After taking possession of the ball, takes more than 6 seconds to release the ball back into play. (Possession includes bouncing or tossing up and catching the ball)
  - b. Touches the ball again with his/her hands after releasing it into play, before it has been touched by another player from either team.
  - c. Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been deliberately played to him/her by a teammate

- d. Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been received directly from a throw-in by a teammate

## Law 14 Penalty Kick

Note: There are No Penalty Kicks in U5 - U8 games where there are no goalkeepers

A penalty kick shall be awarded when a foul, which ordinarily results in the awarding of a direct free kick, occurs within the offending team's penalty area.

1. All players except the kicker and the opposing team's goalkeeper shall be within the field of play, but outside the penalty area and at least 10 yards from and behind the penalty mark until the ball is kicked.
2. The team's penalty taker can have (quick) treatment/assessment and then take the kick
3. The goalkeeper must not be touching the goalposts/crossbar/nets; they must not be moving
4. The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken; cannot stand behind the line
5. The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary, with part of the ball touching or overhanging the center of the penalty mark. To be in play, the ball shall be moved forward. Once the kicker starts his/her approach toward the ball he/she must not completely stop his/her movement.
6. Encroachment by either team is only penalized if it has an impact on the play.
7. After the penalty kick is properly taken, the ball may be played by any player except the kicker. The ball must be touched by another player from either team before the kicker may touch it again.

# Law 15 The Throw-In

(Note: U5 & U6 age divisions do not re-start play with a throw-in, most U6 players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law. This leads to endless retakes from one team to the other. In U5 & U6 age divisions a Kick-In shall be the method of putting the ball back into play. All rules (taking into account that the hands are not used) of the throw-in apply to the kick-in)

1. A throw-in shall be awarded to a team when the ball last touched a member of the opposing team before the entire ball passes beyond the touchline either in the air or on the ground. A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.
2. The ball shall be thrown in any direction from the point where it crossed the touchline by a player who is facing the field of play and has both feet on the ground on or behind the touchline. The player shall use both hands and shall deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous movement.

**Sanction: Throw-in awarded to the opponent from the spot of the foul. (U7 & U8 Players shall be given a second chance)**

3. While a throw-in is being taken, an opponent shall neither interfere with nor in any way impede the actions of the thrower, and must be at least 2 yards from the point on the touchline where a throw-in is to be taken, even if the thrower is back from the line.
4. On the throw-in, the ball is playable when it has left the hands of the thrower and any part of it breaks the plane of the touchline. After the throw-in, the ball may be played by either team. The thrower may not touch the ball until it has been touched or played by another player.

**Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.**

5. If on the throw-in, the ball fails to enter the field of play before it touches the ground, the ball is considered to not be in play and the throw-in is re-taken by the same team if otherwise properly taken.

# Law 16 Goal Kick

1. A goal kick is awarded when a member of the attacking(offense) team last touches the ball and it crosses the opponent's goal line (not in the goal)
2. A player on the defending team shall kick the ball from any point inside the goal area (the line is part of the goal area)
3. Once the ball is placed it must be played. (The ball cannot be picked up and moved to another spot – if moved after being placed the player can receive a caution for time delay) The ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves, it can be played before leaving the penalty area.
4. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.  
**Sanction: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.**
5. Players of the attacking team must remain outside of the penalty area until the ball is in play.
6. Players of the defending team may remain in the penalty area during the goal kick, and may touch the ball before it leaves the penalty area.
7. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team

# Law 17 The Corner Kick

1. A corner kick is awarded when a member of the defending (defense) team last touches the ball and it crosses the defending team's goal line (not in the goal)
2. A player on the attacking team shall kick the ball from a point inside the quarter circle of the corner of the field nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
3. Players of the defending team must be at least ten yards (U14 & up) from the ball until it is in play. Other distances from the ball by age group are:
  - a. U-9 - U-12 - 8 yards away from the ball
  - b. U-7 - U-8 - 5 yards away from the ball
  - c. U-5 – U-6 – 3 yards away from the ball
4. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves
5. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.  
**Sanction:** Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.
6. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team

## The Build Out Lines

1. When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play (restart is an indirect free kick for the opposing team if there is an infraction).
2. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed) and the restart is an indirect free kick taken on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred).
3. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.
4. The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play (is kicked and obviously moves).
5. Ideally the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line.
6. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.
7. To support the intent of the development rule, coaches and referees should be mindful of any intentional delays being caused by opponents not retreating in a timely manner or encroaching over the build out line prior to the ball being put into play.
8. Coaches are responsible for addressing these types of issues with their players
9. Referees can manage the situation with misconduct if deemed appropriate
10. Referees should be flexible when enforcing the six second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line.
11. Offside boundary for U10 is now at the build-out line (instead of at the midfield line)
12. If the build out line is not visible on the field the referee will approximate it's location.