



2019-2020 RULE CHANGES

Highlights of changes to the Laws Of The Game effective June 1st, 2019

- The team that wins the toss can now choose to take the kick-off or which goal to attack (previously they only had the choice of which goal to attack).
- A player being substituted must leave the field by the nearest point on the touchline/goal line (unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly/immediately at the halfway line or a different point because of safety, injury etc.).
- At a goal kick and a free kick for the defending team in their own penalty area, the ball is in play as soon the kick is taken; it does not have to leave the penalty area before it can be played.
- For a Free Kick, when there is a 'wall' of three or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1 yard of the wall. An attacker less than 1 yard from the 'wall' when the kick is taken will be penalized with an indirect free kick.
- New drop ball procedures:
 - If play is stopped inside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper,
 - 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,
 - A dropped ball can now be awarded when the ball hits a match official and; a) goes into the goal, b) team possession changes or, c) a promising attack starts.In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least 4.5 yards away.
- The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line at the taking of a penalty kick and cannot stand behind the line. The goalkeeper must not be moving or touching the goalposts/crossbar/nets. The team's penalty taker can have a quick med check, if necessary, and then take the kick.
- Clearer wording for 'handball'. Deliberate handball remains an offence. The following 'handball' situations, even if accidental, will result in a free kick: a) the ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand/arm; b) a player gains control/possession of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then scores, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity; c) the ball touches a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger; d) the ball touches a player's hand/arm when it is above their shoulder (unless the player has deliberately played the ball which then touches their hand/arm).
- Difference between 'cooling' breaks (90 secs – 3 mins) and 'drinks' breaks (max 1 min).
- Yellow and red cards can now be shown for misconduct by team officials.

This document briefly summarizes major changes only.