



## 2019-2020 RULE CHANGES

### Highlights of changes to the Laws Of The Game effective June 1<sup>st</sup>, 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. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area and at least 10 yards away until the ball is in play.
- 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.
- For penalty kicks: the goalkeeper must not be touching the goalposts, crossbar or nets. 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 (or in front of) the line. The team's penalty taker can have a quick med check/treatment, 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 summarizes the main changes only.

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