

INTERPRETATION OF THE LAWS OF THE GAME AND GUIDELINES FOR REFEREES

Field markings

It is not permissible to mark the field of play with broken lines or furrows.

If a player makes unauthorised marks on the field of play with his foot, he must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour. If the referee notices this being done during the match, he must caution the offending player for unsporting behaviour when the ball next goes out of play.

Only the lines indicated in Law 1 are to be marked on the field of play.

Goals

If the crossbar becomes displaced or broken, play is stopped until it has been repaired or replaced in position. If it is not possible to repair the crossbar, the match must be abandoned. The use of a rope to replace the crossbar is not permitted. If the crossbar can be repaired, the match is restarted with a dropped ball at the place where the ball was located when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Commercial advertising

Commercial advertising shall be at least 1 m (1 yd) from the boundary lines of the field of play.

No form of commercial advertising, whether real or virtual, is permitted on the field of play, on the ground within the area enclosed by the goal nets or the technical area, or within 1 m (1 yd) of the touch line from the time the teams enter the field of play until they have left it at half-time and from the time the teams re-enter the field of play until the end of the match. Similarly, advertising is not permitted on the goals, nets, flagposts or their flags and no extraneous equipment (cameras, microphones etc.) may be attached to these items.

Logos and emblems

The reproduction, whether real or virtual, of representative logos or emblems of FIFA, confederations, member associations, leagues, clubs or other bodies is forbidden on the field of play, the goal nets and the areas they enclose, the goals, the flagposts and their flags during playing time.

Additional balls

Additional balls may be placed around the field of play for use during a match provided that they meet the requirements of Law 2 and their use is under the control of the referee.

Extra balls on the field of play

If an extra ball enters the field of play during the match, the referee must stop the match only if it interferes with play. Play must be restarted by a dropped ball in the position where the match ball was at the time when the match was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.

If an extra ball enters the field of play during the match without interfering with play, the referee must have it removed at the earliest possible opportunity.

Substitution procedure

- A substitution may be made only during a stoppage in play
- The assistant referee signals that a substitution has been requested
- The player being substituted receives the referee's permission to leave the field of play, unless he is already off the field of play for reasons that comply with the Laws of the Game
- The referee gives the substitute permission to enter the field of play
- Before entering the field of play, the substitute waits for the player he is replacing to leave the field
- The player being substituted is not obliged to leave the field of play on the halfway line
- Permission to proceed with a substitution may be refused under certain circumstances, e.g. if the substitute is not ready to enter the field of play
- A substitute who has not completed the substitution procedure by setting foot onto the field of play cannot restart play by taking a throw-in or corner kick
- If a player who is about to be replaced refuses to leave the field of play, play continues
- If a substitution is made during the half-time interval or before extra time, the procedure is to be completed before the second half or extra time kicks off

Extra persons on the field of play

Outside agents

Anyone not indicated on the team list as a player, substitute or team official is deemed to be an outside agent as is a player who has been sent off.

If an outside agent enters the field of play:

- the referee must stop play (although not immediately if the outside agent does not interfere with play)
- the referee must have him removed from the field of play and its immediate surroundings
- if the referee stops the match, he must restart play with a dropped ball in the position where the ball was at the time when the match was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped

Team officials

If a team official enters the field of play:

- the referee must stop play (although not immediately if the team official does not interfere with play or if the advantage can be applied)
- the referee must have him removed from the field of play and if his behaviour is irresponsible, the referee must expel him from the field of play and its immediate surroundings
- if the referee stops the match, he must restart play with a dropped ball in the position where the ball was at the time when the match was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped

Player outside the field of play

If, after leaving the field of play to correct unauthorised equipment or kit, to be treated for an injury or bleeding, because he has blood on his kit or for any other reason with the referee's permission, a player re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission, the referee must:

- stop play (although not immediately if the player does not interfere with play or if the advantage can be applied)
- caution the player for entering the field of play without permission
- order the player to leave the field of play if necessary (e.g. infringement of Law 4)

If the referee stops play, it must be restarted:

- with an indirect free kick for the opposing team from the position of the ball when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick) if there is no other infringement
- in accordance with Law 12 if the player infringes this Law

If a player accidentally crosses one of the boundary lines of the field of play, he is not deemed to have committed an infringement. Going off the field of play may be considered to be part of a playing movement.

Substitute or substituted player

If a substitute or a substituted player enters the field of play without permission:

- the referee must stop play (although not immediately if the player in question does not interfere with play or if the advantage can be applied)
- the referee must caution him for unsporting behaviour
- the player must leave the field of play

If the referee stops play, it must be restarted with an indirect free kick for the opposing team from the position of the ball when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick).

Goal scored with an extra person on the field of play

If, after a goal is scored, the referee realises, before play restarts, that there was an extra person on the field of play when the goal was scored:

- the referee must disallow the goal if:
 - the extra person was an outside agent and he interfered with play
 - the extra person was a player, substitute, substituted player or team official associated with the team that scored the goal
- the referee must allow the goal if:
 - the extra person was an outside agent who did not interfere with play
 - the extra person was a player, substitute, substituted player or team official associated with the team that conceded the goal

Minimum number of players

If the rules of a competition state that all of the players and substitutes must be named before kick-off and a team begins a match with fewer than 11 players, only the players named in the starting line-up may complete the 11 upon their arrival.

Although a match may not START if either team consists of fewer than seven players, the minimum number of players in a team required for a match to CONTINUE is left to the discretion of member associations. However, it is the opinion of the International F.A. Board that a match should not continue if there are fewer than seven players in either team.

If a team has fewer than seven players because one or more players has deliberately left the field of play, the referee is not obliged to stop the match and the advantage may be played. In such cases, the referee must not allow the match to resume after the ball has gone out of play if a team does not have the minimum number of seven players.

Basic equipment

Colours:

- If the jerseys of the two goalkeepers are the same colour and neither has another jersey to change into, the referee shall allow play to begin

If a player loses his footwear accidentally and immediately plays the ball and/or scores a goal, there is no infringement and the goal is awarded because he lost his footwear by accident.

Goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms as part as their basic equipment.

Other equipment

A player may use equipment other than the basic equipment provided that its sole purpose is to protect him physically and it poses no danger to him or any other player.

All items of clothing or equipment other than the basic equipment must be inspected by the referee and determined not to be dangerous.

Modern protective equipment such as headgear, facemasks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material are not considered dangerous and are therefore permitted.

In view of the new technology that has made sports spectacles much safer, both for the wearer and for other players, referees should show tolerance when authorising their use, particularly for younger players. If an item of clothing or equipment that has been inspected at the start of a match and determined not to be dangerous becomes dangerous or is used in a dangerous manner during the match, its use must no longer be allowed.

The use of radio communication systems between players and/or technical staff is not permitted.

LAW 4 – THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

Jewellery

All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands etc.) are strictly forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not acceptable.

Referees are also prohibited from wearing jewellery (except for a watch or similar device for timing the match).

Disciplinary sanctions

The players are to be inspected before the match begins and substitutes before they enter the field of play. If a player is discovered to be wearing unauthorised clothing or jewellery during play, the referee must:

- inform the player that the item in question must be removed
- order the player to leave the field of play at the next stoppage if he is unable or unwilling to comply
- caution the player if he wilfully refuses to comply or, having been told to remove the item, is discovered to be wearing the item again

If play is stopped to caution the player, an indirect free kick must be awarded to the opposing team from the position of the ball when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick).



Powers & Duties

The referee is authorised to stop play if, in his opinion, the floodlights are inadequate.

If an object thrown by a spectator hits the referee or one of the assistant referees or a player or team official, the referee may allow the match to continue, suspend play or abandon the match depending on the severity of the incident. He must, in all cases, report the incident(s) to the appropriate authorities.

The referee has the power to show yellow or red cards during the half-time interval and after the match has finished as well as during extra time and kicks from the penalty mark, since the match remains under his jurisdiction at these times.

If a referee is temporarily incapacitated for any reason, play may continue under the supervision of the assistant referees until the ball next goes out of play.

If a spectator blows a whistle and the referee considers the whistle interfered with play (e.g. a player picks up the ball with his hands, assuming that play has been stopped), the referee must stop the match and restart the play with a dropped ball from the position of the ball when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Advantage

The referee may play advantage whenever an infringement or offence occurs.

The referee should consider the following circumstances in deciding whether to apply the advantage or stop play:

- the severity of the offence: if the infringement warrants an expulsion, the referee must stop play and send off the player unless there is a subsequent opportunity to score a goal
- the position where the offence was committed: the closer to the opponent's goal, the more effective it can be
- the chances of an immediate, dangerous attack on the opponents' goal
- the atmosphere of the match

The decision to penalise the original offence must be taken within a few seconds.

If the offence warrants a caution, it must be issued at the next stoppage. However, unless there is a clear advantage, it is recommended that the referee stops play and cautions the player immediately. If the caution is NOT issued at the next stoppage, it cannot be shown later.

Injured players

The referee must adhere to the following procedure when dealing with injured players:

- play is allowed to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in the opinion of the referee, only slightly injured
- play is stopped if, in the opinion of the referee, a player is seriously injured
- after questioning the injured player, the referee may authorise one, or at most two doctors, to enter the field of play to assess the injury and arrange the player's safe and swift removal from the field of play
- the stretcher-bearers should enter the field of play with a stretcher at the same time as the doctors to allow the player to be removed as quickly as possible
- the referee must ensure an injured player is safely removed from the field of play
- a player is not allowed to receive treatment on the field of play
- any player bleeding from a wound must leave the field of play. He may not return until the referee is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped. A player is not permitted to wear clothing with blood on it
- as soon as the referee has authorised the doctors to enter the field of play, the player must leave the field of play, either on a stretcher or on foot. If a player does not comply, he must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour
- an injured player may only return to the field of play after the match has restarted
- when the ball is in play, an injured player must re-enter the field of play from the touch line. When the ball is out of play, the injured player may re-enter from any of the boundary lines
- irrespective of whether the ball is in play or not, only the referee is authorised to allow an injured player to re-enter the field of play
- the referee may give permission for an injured player to return to the field of play if an assistant referee or the fourth official verifies that the player is ready

- if play has not otherwise been stopped for another reason, or if an injury suffered by a player is not the result of a breach of the Laws of the Game, the referee must restart play with a dropped ball from the position of the ball when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped
- the referee must allow for the full amount of time lost through injury to be played at the end of each period of play
- once the referee has decided to issue a card to a player who is injured and has to leave the field of play for treatment, the referee must issue the card before the player leaves the field of play

Exceptions to this ruling are to be made only when:

- a goalkeeper is injured
- a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need immediate attention
- a severe injury has occurred, e.g. swallowed tongue, concussion, broken leg

More than one offence occurring at the same time

- Offences committed by two players from the same team:
 - the referee must punish the most serious offence when players commit more than one offence at the same time
 - play must be restarted according to the most serious offence committed
- Offences committed by players from different teams:
 - the referee must stop play and restart it with a dropped ball from the position of the ball at the time of the stoppage, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped

Positioning with ball in play

Recommendations

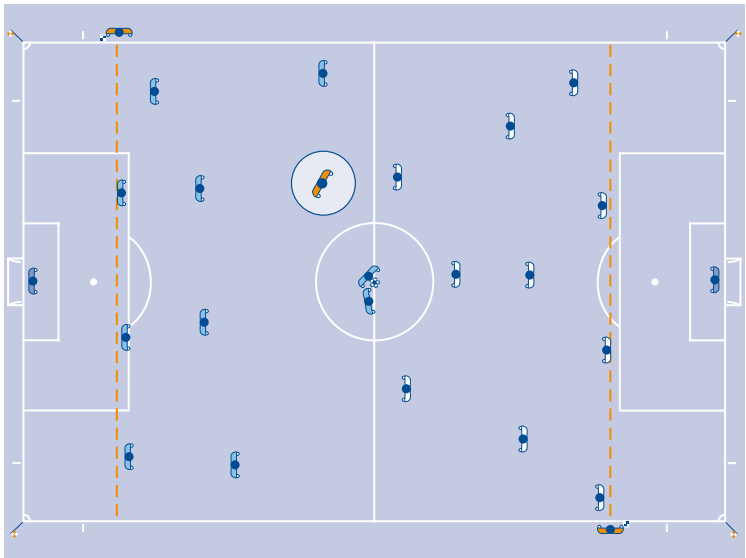
- The play should be between the referee and the lead assistant referee
- The lead assistant referee should be within the referee's field of vision. The referee should use a wide diagonal system
- Staying towards the outside of the play makes it easier to keep play and the lead assistant referee within the referee's field of vision
- The referee should be close enough to see play without interfering with play
- "What needs to be seen" is not always in the vicinity of the ball. The referee should also pay attention to:
 - aggressive individual player confrontations off the ball
 - possible offences in the area towards which play is heading
 - offences occurring after the ball is played away

Positioning in dead-ball situations

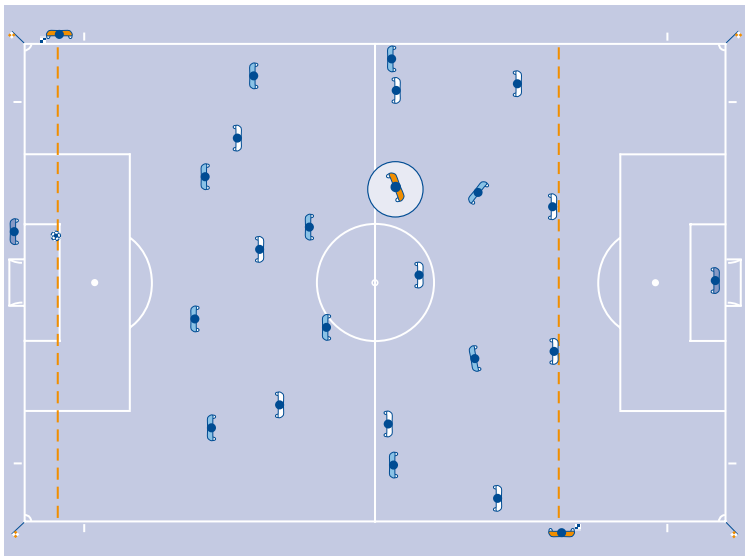
The best position is one from which the referee can make the right decision. All recommendations about positioning are based on probabilities and must be adjusted using specific information about the teams, the players and events in the match up to that point.

The positions suggested in the following graphics are basic and recommended to referees. The reference to a "zone" is intended to emphasise that every recommended position is actually an area within which the referee is most likely to optimise his effectiveness. The zone may be larger, smaller or differently shaped depending on circumstances at the moment in question.

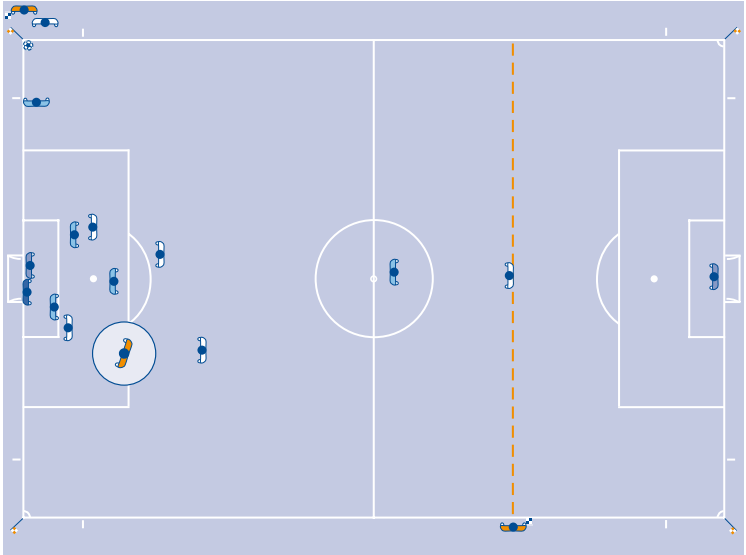
1. Positioning for the kick-off



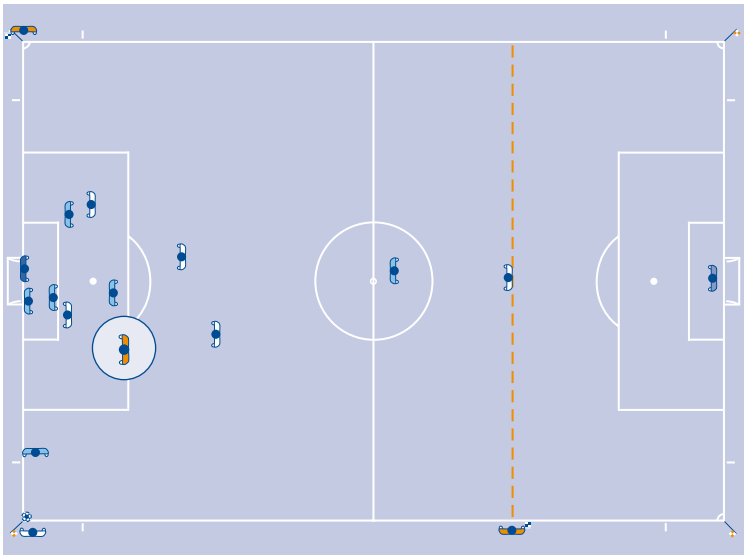
2. Positioning for a goal kick



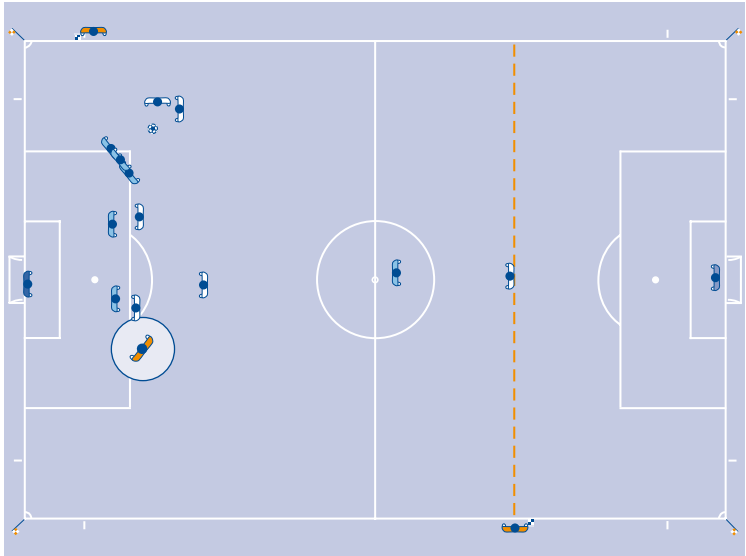
3. Positioning for a corner kick (1)



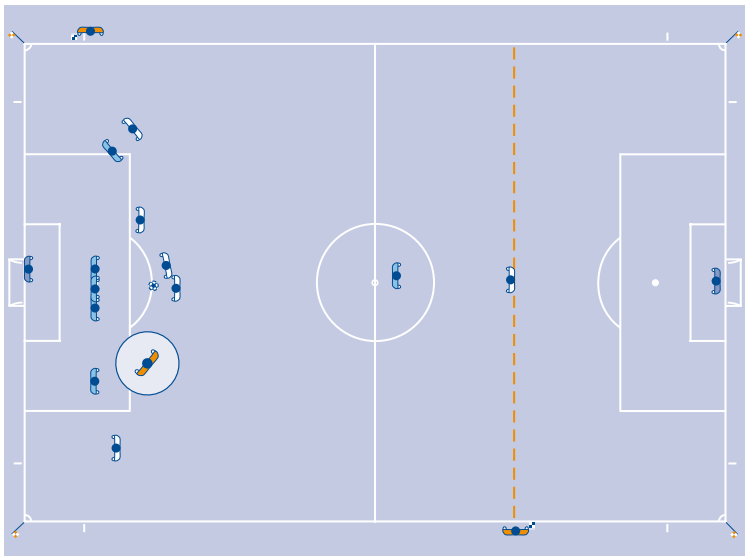
4. Positioning for a corner kick (2)



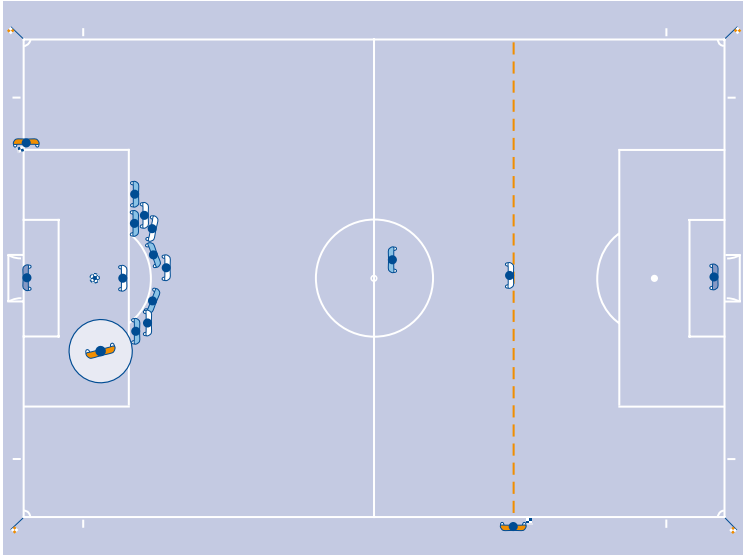
5. Positioning for a free kick (1)



6. Positioning for a free kick (2)



9. Positioning for a penalty kick



REFEREE SIGNALS



Direct free kick



Advantage



Indirect free kick



Yellow card



Red card

Use of whistle

The whistle *is* needed to:

- start play (1st, 2nd half), after a goal
- stop play:
 - for a free kick or penalty kick
 - if the match is suspended or abandoned
 - when a period of play has ended due to the expiration of time
- restart play at:
 - free kicks when the wall is ordered back the appropriate distance
 - penalty kicks
- restart play after it has been stopped due to:
 - the issue of a yellow or red card for misconduct
 - injury
 - substitution

The whistle is NOT needed to:

- stop play for:
 - a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in
 - a goal
- restart play from:
 - a free kick, goal kick, corner kick, throw-in

A whistle which is used too frequently unnecessarily will have less impact when it is needed. When a discretionary whistle is needed to start play, the referee should clearly announce to the players that the restart may not occur until after that signal.

Body language

Body language is a tool that the referee uses to:

- help him control the match
- show authority and self-control

Body language is not:

- an explanation of a decision

Duties and responsibilities

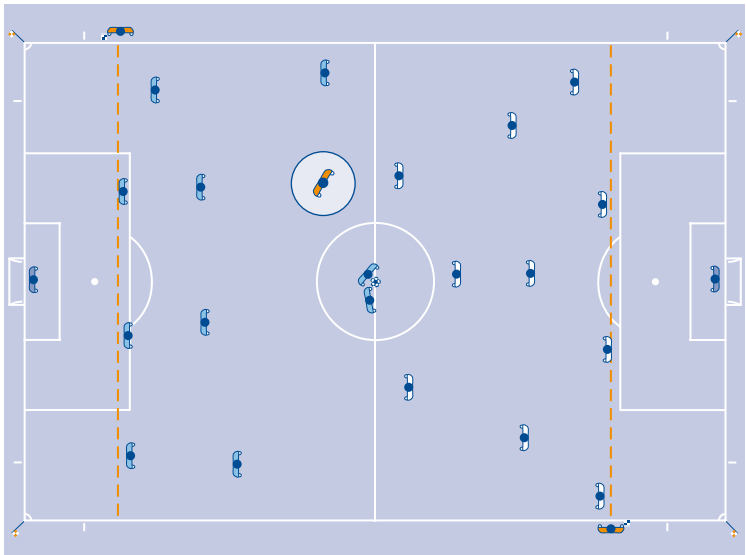
The assistant referees help the referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game. They also assist the referee in all other matters involving the running of the match at the request and direction of the referee. This commonly includes such matters as:

- inspecting the field, the balls used and players' equipment
- determining if problems with equipment or bleeding have been resolved
- monitoring the substitution procedure
- maintaining back-up records of time, goals and misconduct

Positioning and team work

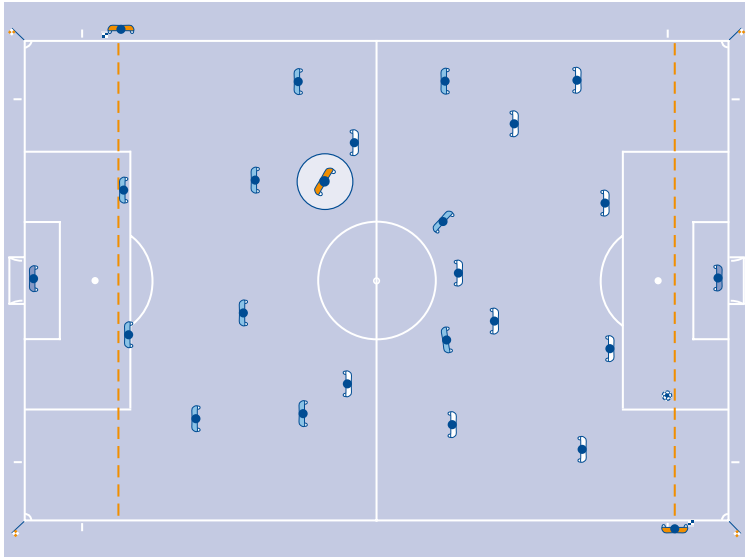
1. Kick-off

The assistant referees must be in line with the second last defender.



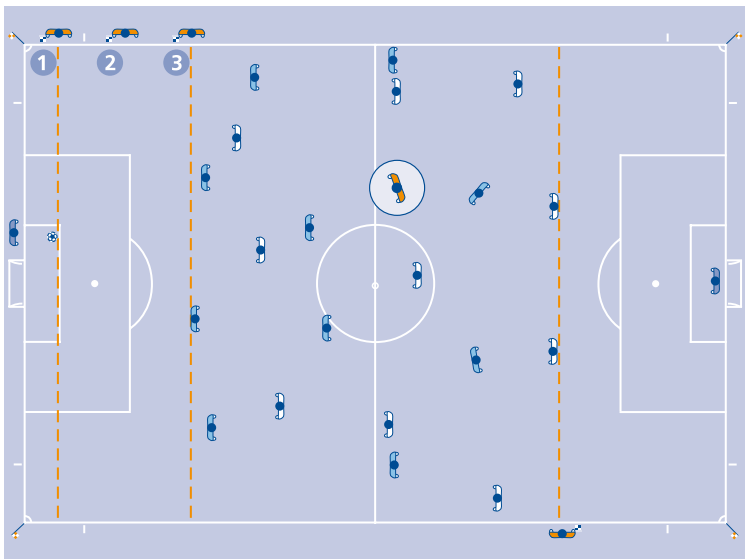
2. General positioning during the match

The assistant referees must be in line with the second last defender or the ball if it is nearer the goal line than the second last defender. The assistant referees must always face the field of play.



3. Goal kick

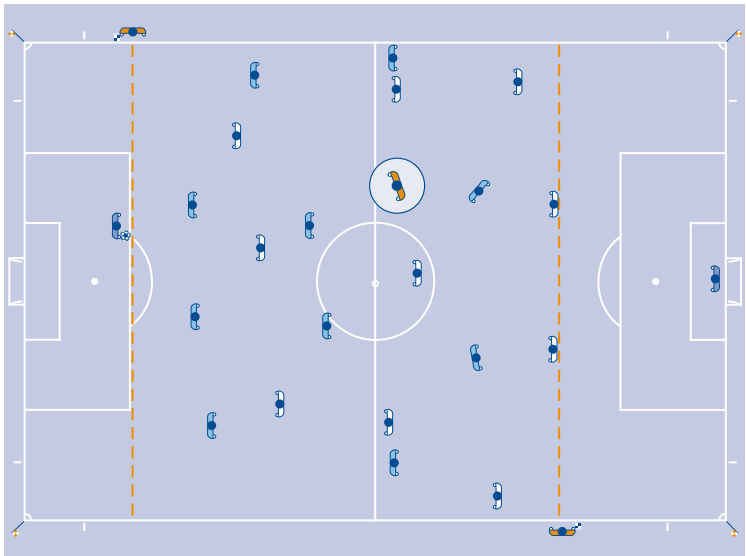
1. The assistant referees must check first if the ball is inside the goal area:
 - if the ball is not placed correctly, the assistant referee must not move from his position, make eye contact with the referee and raise his flag
2. Once the ball is placed correctly inside the goal area, the assistant referee must move to the edge of the penalty area to check that the ball leaves the penalty area (ball in play) and that the attackers are outside:
 - if the second last defender takes the goal kick, the assistant referee must move directly to the edge of the penalty area
3. Finally, the assistant referee must take a position to check the offside line, which is a priority in any case



4. Goalkeeper releasing the ball

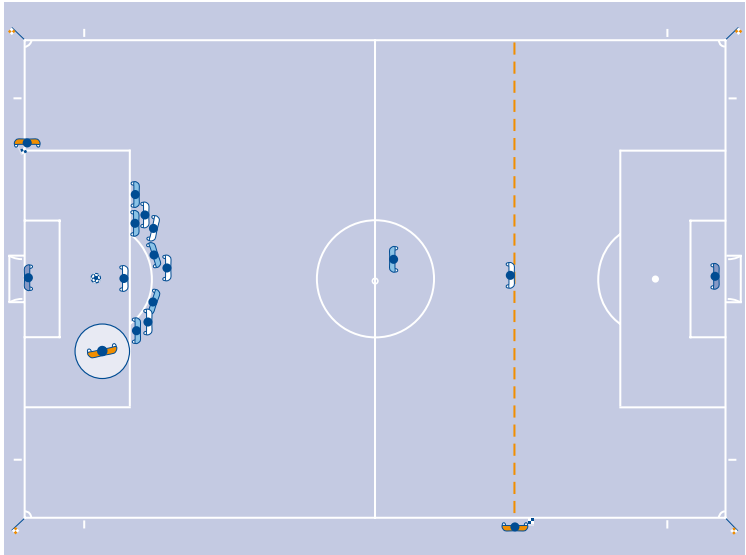
The assistant referees must take a position in line with the edge of the penalty area and check that the goalkeeper does not touch the ball with his hands outside the penalty area.

Once the goalkeeper has released the ball, the assistant referees must take a position to check the offside line, which is a priority in any case.



5. Penalty kick

The assistant referee must be positioned at the intersection of the goal line and the penalty area. If the goalkeeper blatantly moves off the goal line before the ball is kicked and a goal is not scored, the assistant referee must raise his flag.

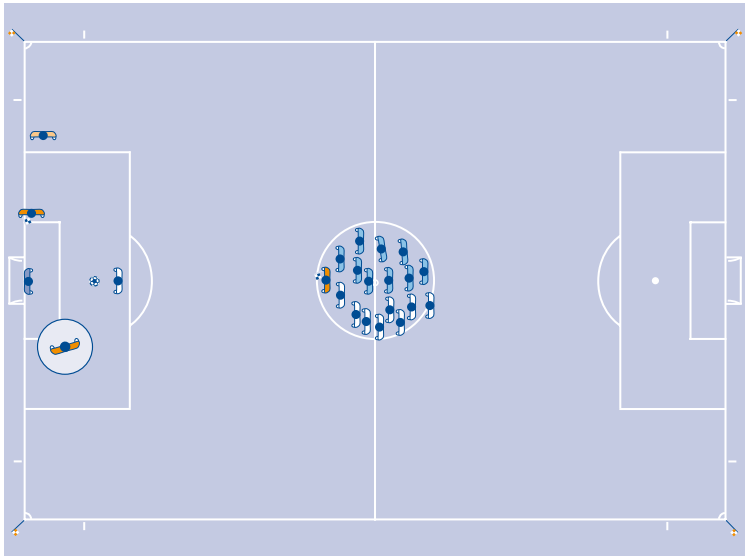


6. Kicks from the penalty mark

One assistant referee must be positioned at the intersection of the goal line and the goal area. His main duty is to check if the ball crosses the line:

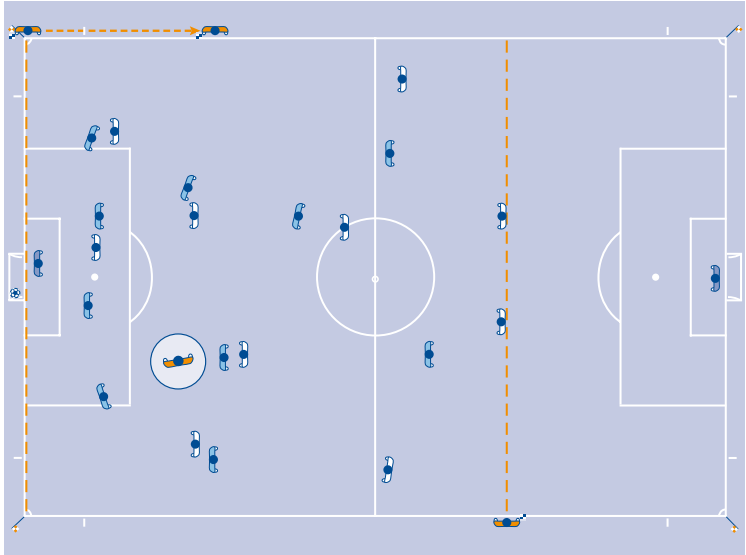
- when it is clear that the ball has crossed the goal line, the assistant referee must make eye contact with the referee without giving any additional signal
- when a goal has been scored but it is not clear whether the ball has crossed the line, the assistant referee must first raise his flag to attract the referee's attention and then confirm the goal

The other assistant referee must be situated in the centre circle to control the remaining players from both teams.



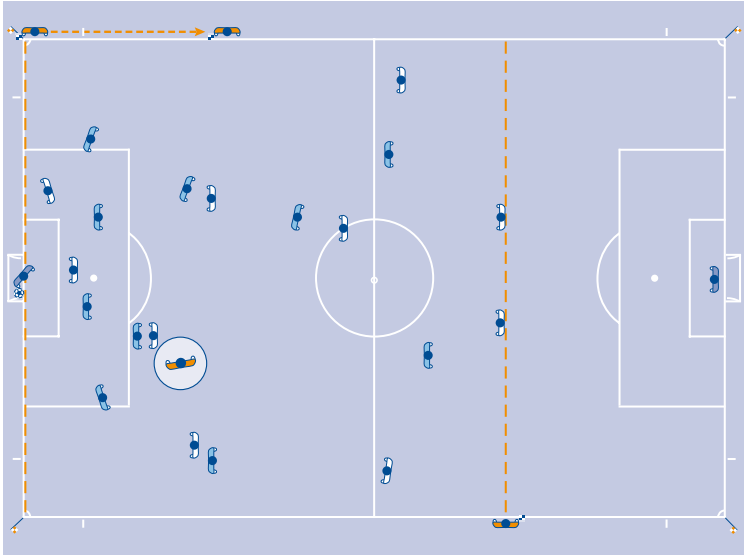
7. "Goal – No Goal" situations

When a goal has been scored and there is no doubt about the decision, the referee and assistant referee must make eye contact and the assistant referee must then run quickly 25-30 metres along the touch line towards the halfway line without raising his flag.



LAW 6 – THE ASSISTANT REFEREES

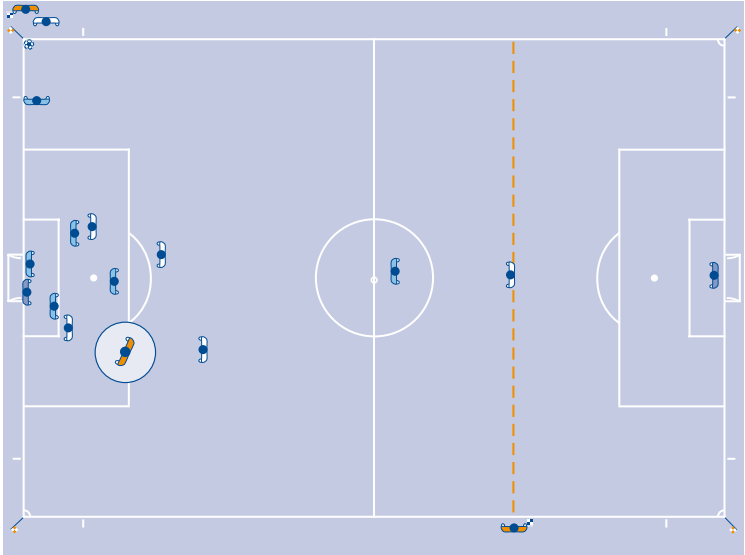
When a goal has been scored but the ball appears still to be in play, the assistant referee must first raise his flag to attract the referee's attention then continue with the normal goal procedure of running quickly 25-30 metres along the touch line towards the halfway line.



On occasions when the whole of the ball does not cross the goal line and play continues as normal because a goal has not been scored, the referee must make eye contact with the assistant referee and if necessary give a discreet hand signal.

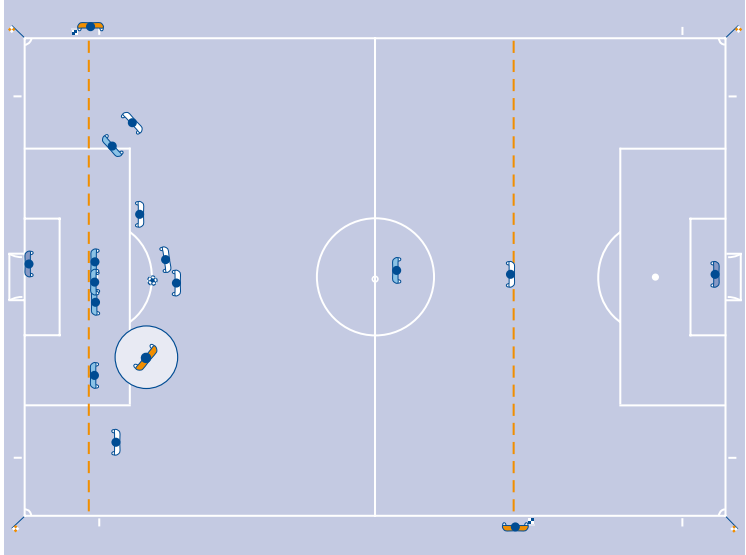
8. Corner kick

The assistant referee's position for a corner kick is behind the corner flag in line with the goal line. In this position he must not interfere with the player taking the corner kick. He must check that the ball is properly placed inside the corner arc.



9. Free kick

The assistant referee's position for a free kick must be in line with the second last defender in order to check the offside line which is a priority in any case. However, he must be ready to follow the ball by moving down the touch line towards the corner flag if there is a direct shot on goal.



Gestures

As a general rule, the assistant referee must give no obvious hand signals. However, in some instances, a discreet hand signal may give valuable support to the referee. The hand signal should have a clear meaning. The meaning should have been discussed and agreed upon in the pre-match discussion.

Running technique

As a general rule, the assistant referee should face the pitch whilst running. Side-to-side movement should be used for short distances. This is especially important when judging offside and gives the assistant referee a better line of vision.

Signal beep

Referees are reminded that the signal beep system is an additional signal to be used only when necessary in order to gain the attention of the referee.

Situations when the signal beep is useful include:

- offside
- fouls (outside the view of the referee)
- throw-in, corner kick or goal kick (tight decisions)
- goal situations (tight decisions)

ASSISTANT REFEREE SIGNALS



Substitution



Throw-in
for attacker



Throw-in
for defender



Goal kick



Corner kick



Offside



Offside on the near side of the field



Offside in the centre of the field



Offside on the far side of the field



Foul by defender



Foul by attacker



Flag technique and team work

The assistant referee's flag must always be visible to the referee, unfurled and still whilst running.

When making a signal, the assistant referee must stop running, face the field of play, make eye contact with the referee and raise the flag with deliberate (not hasty or exaggerated) motions. The flag should be like an extension of the arm.

The assistant referees must raise the flag using the hand that will also be used for the next signal in a sequence. If circumstances change and the other hand must be used for the next signal, the assistant referee should move his flag to the opposite hand below the waist.

Whenever the assistant referee signals that the ball is out of play, he shall continue to signal until the referee acknowledges it.

Whenever the assistant referee signals for violent conduct and the signal is not seen immediately:

- if play has been stopped for disciplinary action to be taken, the restart must be in accordance with the Laws (free kick, penalty kick etc.)
- if play has already restarted, the referee may still take disciplinary action but not penalise the offence with a free kick or penalty kick

Throw-in

When the ball crosses the touch line near to the assistant referee's position, he must make a direct signal to indicate the direction of the throw-in.

When the ball crosses the touch line far from the assistant referee's position and the throw-in decision is an obvious one, the assistant referee must also make a direct signal to indicate the direction of the throw-in.

When the ball crosses the touch line far from the assistant referee's position but the ball appears still to be in play or if the assistant referee is in any doubt, the assistant referee must raise his flag to inform the referee that the ball is out of play, make eye contact with the referee and follow the referee's signal.

Corner kick / Goal kick

When the ball crosses the goal line near to the assistant referee's position, he must make a direct signal with his right hand (better line of vision) to indicate whether it is a goal kick or a corner kick.

When the ball crosses the goal line near to the assistant referee's position but the ball appears still to be in play, the assistant referee must first raise his flag to inform the referee that the ball is out of play, then indicate whether it is a goal kick or a corner kick.

When the ball crosses the goal line far from the assistant referee's position, the assistant referee must raise his flag to inform the referee that the ball is out of play, make eye contact and follow the referee's decision. The assistant referee may also make a direct signal if the decision is an obvious one.

Offside

The first action the assistant referee makes after an offside decision is to raise his flag. He then uses his flag to indicate the area of the pitch in which the offence occurred.

If the flag is not immediately seen by the referee, the assistant referee must keep signalling until it has been acknowledged or the ball is clearly in the control of the defending team.

The flag must be raised using the right hand, giving the assistant referee a better line of vision.

Substitution

When dealing with substitutions, the assistant referee must first be informed by the fourth official. The assistant referee must then signal to the referee at the next stoppage in the match. The assistant referee does not need to move to the halfway line as the fourth official carries out the substitution procedure.

If there is no fourth official, the assistant referee must assist with substitution procedures. In this case, the referee must wait until the assistant referee is back in position before restarting play.

Fouls

The assistant referee must raise his flag when a foul or misconduct is committed in his immediate vicinity or out of the referee's vision. In all other situations, he must wait and offer his opinion if it is required. If this is the case, the assistant referee must report what he has seen and heard and which players are involved to the referee.

Before signalling for an offence, the assistant referee must determine that:

- the offence was out of the view of the referee or the referee's view was obstructed
- the referee would not have applied advantage if he had seen the offence

When a foul or misconduct is committed, the assistant referee must:

- raise his flag with the same hand that will also be used for the remainder of the signal, this gives the referee a clear indication as to who was fouled
- make eye contact with the referee
- give his flag a slight wave back and forth (avoiding any excessive or aggressive movement)
- use the electronic beep signal, if necessary

The assistant referee must use the "wait and see technique" in order to allow play to continue and not raise his flag when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from the advantage. In this case, it is very important for the assistant referee to make eye contact with the referee.

Fouls outside the penalty area

When a foul is committed outside the penalty area (near the boundary of the penalty area), the assistant referee should make eye contact with the referee to see where the referee is positioned and what action he has taken. The assistant referee must stand in line with the penalty area and raise his flag if necessary.

In counter-attack situations, the assistant referee should be able to give information such as whether or not a foul has been committed and whether a foul was committed inside or outside the penalty area, which is a priority in any case, and what disciplinary action must be taken.

Fouls inside the penalty area

When a foul is committed inside the penalty area out of the vision of the referee, especially if near to the assistant referee's position, the assistant referee must first make eye contact with the referee to see where the referee is positioned and what action he has taken. If the referee has not taken any action, the assistant referee must raise his flag and use the electronic beep signal and then visibly move down the touch line towards the corner flag.

Mass confrontation

In situations of mass confrontation, the nearest assistant referee may enter the field of play to assist the referee. The other assistant referee must also observe and record details of the incident.

Consultation

When dealing with disciplinary issues, eye contact and a basic discreet hand signal from the assistant referee to the referee may be enough in some cases.

On occasions when direct consultation is required, the assistant referee may advance 2-3 metres onto the field of play if necessary. When talking, the referee and assistant referee shall both turn to face the pitch to avoid being heard by others.

Wall distance

When a free kick is awarded very close to the touch line near the assistant referee's position, the assistant referee may enter the field of play to help ensure that the wall is positioned 9.15 m from the ball. In this case, the referee must wait until the assistant referee is back in position before restarting play.

Allowance for Time Lost

Many stoppages in play are entirely natural (e.g. throw-ins, goal kicks). An allowance is to be made only when these delays are excessive.

The fourth official indicates the minimum additional time decided by the referee at the end of the final minute of each period of play.

The announcement of the additional time does not indicate the exact amount of time left in the match. The time may be increased if the referee considers it appropriate but never reduced.

The referee must not compensate for a timekeeping error during the first half by increasing or reducing the length of the second half.



Dropped Ball

Any player may challenge for the ball (including the goalkeeper). There is no minimum or maximum number of players required to contest a dropped ball. The referee cannot decide who may or may not contest a dropped ball.



The ball inside the field of play touches a person other than a player

If, when the ball is in play, it touches the referee or an assistant referee who is temporarily on the field of play, play continues because the referee and the assistant referees are part of the match.

No Goal

If a referee signals a goal before the ball has passed wholly over the goal line and immediately realises his error, play shall be restarted with a dropped ball from the position of the ball when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Definitions

In the context of Law 11 – Offside, the following definitions apply:

- “nearer to his opponents’ goal line” means that any part of a player’s head, body or feet is nearer to his opponents’ goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent. The arms are not included in this definition
- “interfering with play” means playing or touching the ball passed or touched by a team-mate
- “interfering with an opponent” means preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by clearly obstructing the opponent’s line of vision or movements or making a gesture or movement which, in the opinion of the referee, deceives or distracts an opponent
- “gaining an advantage by being in that position” means playing a ball that rebounds to him off a goalpost or the crossbar having been in an offside position or playing a ball that rebounds to him off an opponent having been in an offside position

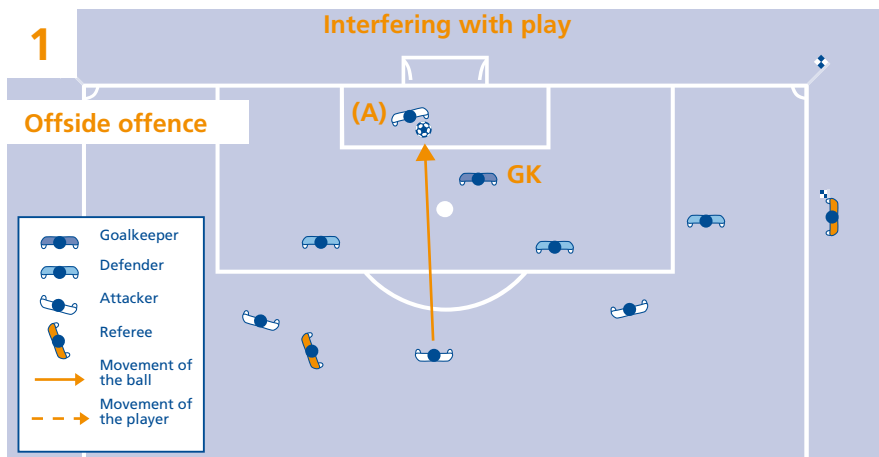
Infringements

When an offside offence occurs, the referee awards an indirect free kick to be taken from the position of the offending player when the ball was last played to him by one of his team-mates.

If a defending player steps behind his own goal line in order to place an opponent in an offside position, the referee must allow play to continue and caution the defender for deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission when the ball is next out of play.

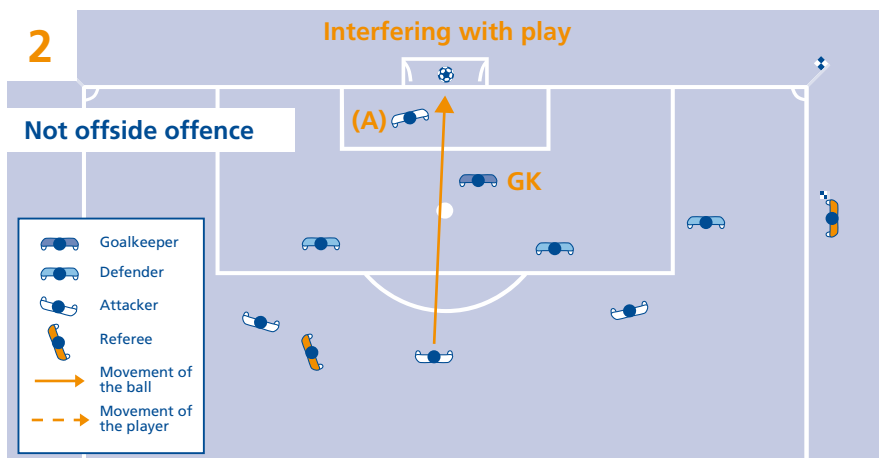
It is not an offence in itself for a player who is in an offside position to step off the field of play to show the referee that he is not involved in active play. However, if the referee considers that he has left the field of play for tactical reasons and has gained an unfair advantage by re-entering the field of play, the player must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour. The player needs to ask for the referee's permission to re-enter the field of play.

If an attacking player remains stationary between the goalposts and inside the goal net as the ball enters the goal, a goal must be awarded. However, if the attacking player distracts an opponent, the goal must be disallowed, the player cautioned for unsporting behaviour and play restarted with a dropped ball from the position of the ball when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.



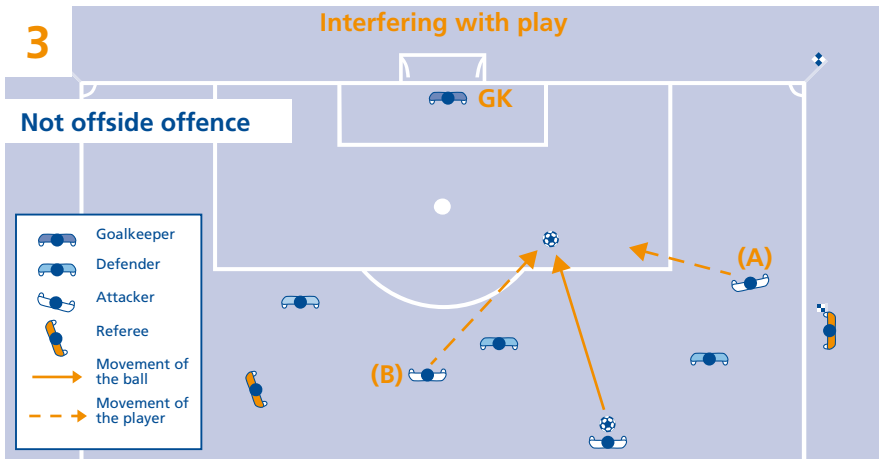
An attacker **in an offside position** (A), not interfering with an opponent, **touches the ball**.

The assistant referee must raise the flag when the player **touches the ball**.

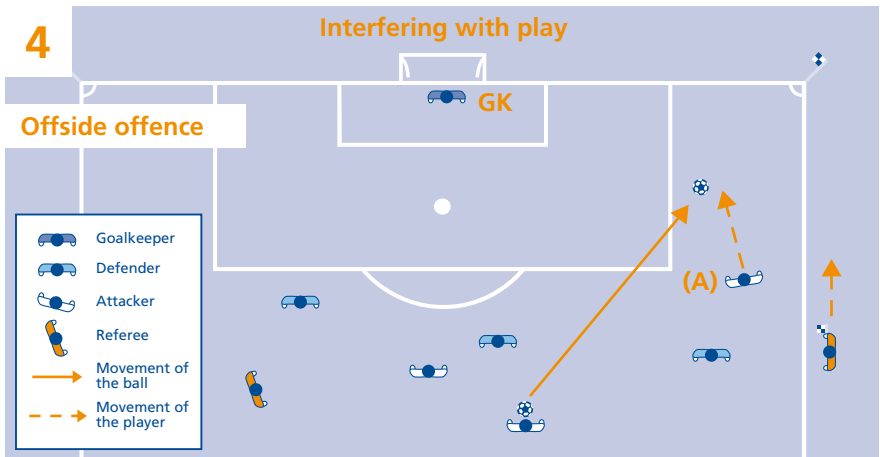


An attacker **in an offside position** (A), not interfering with an opponent, **does not touch the ball**.

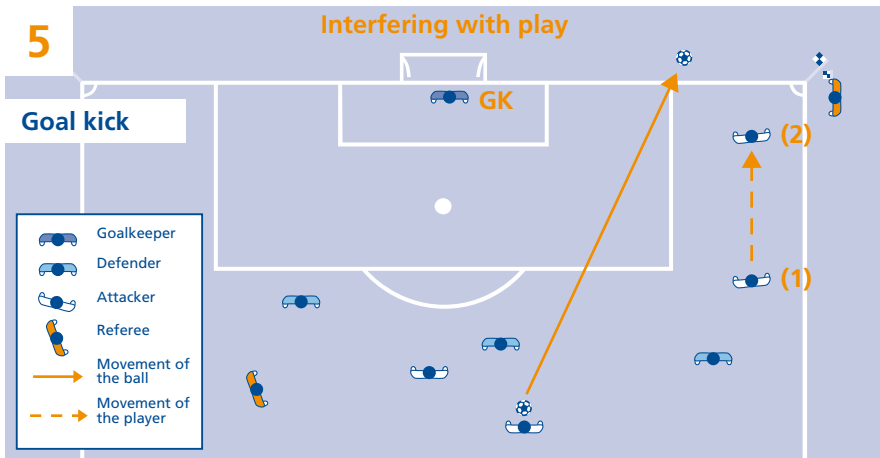
The player cannot be penalised because he did not touch the ball.



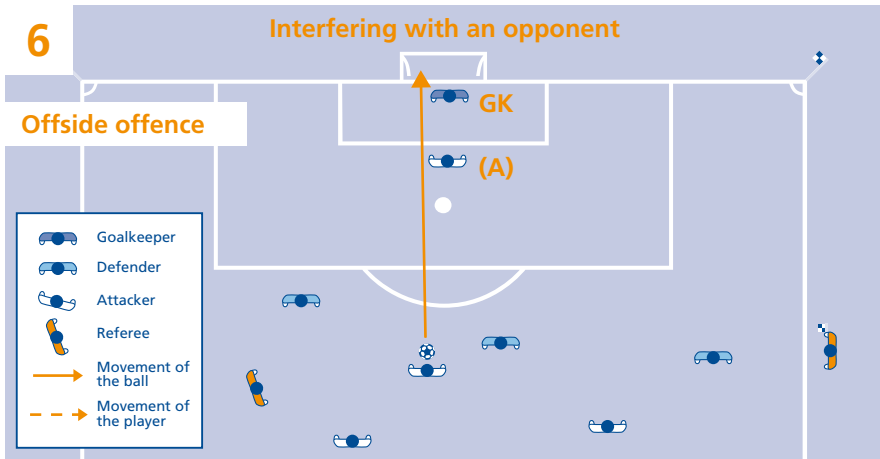
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) runs towards the ball and a team-mate **in an onside position** (B) also runs towards the ball and plays it. (A) cannot be penalised because he did not touch the ball.



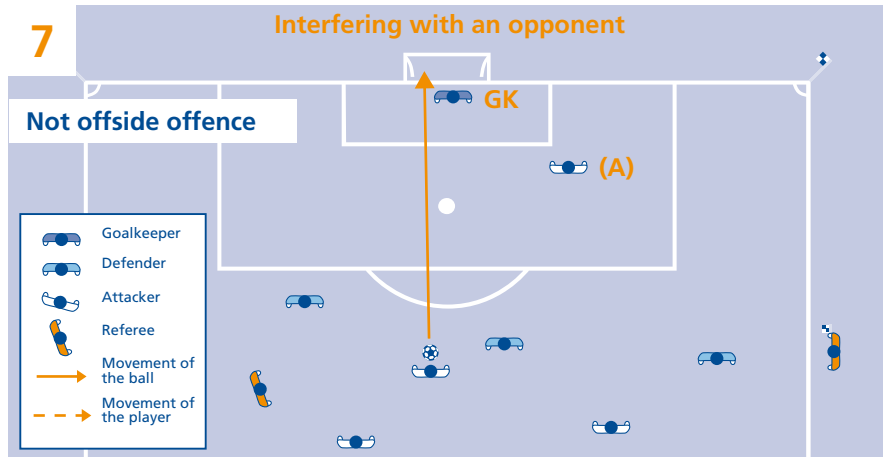
A player **in an offside position** (A) may be penalised before playing or touching the ball, if, in the opinion of the referee, no other team-mate in an onside position has the opportunity to play the ball.



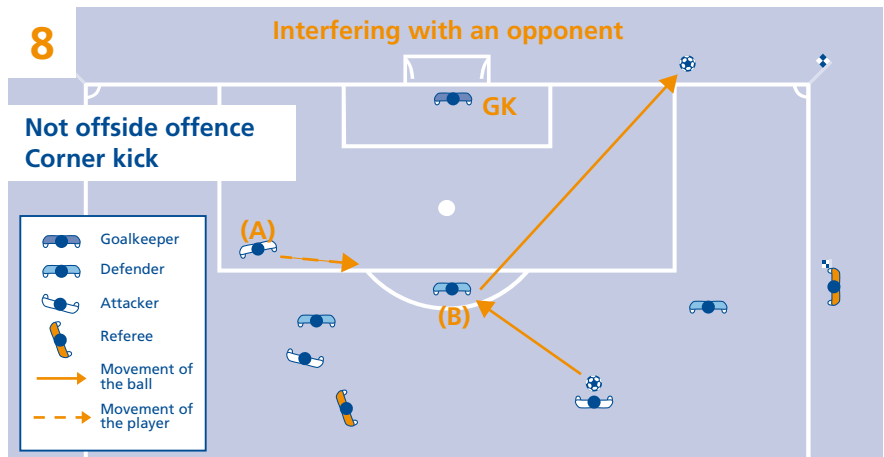
An attacker **in an offside position** (1) runs towards the ball and **does not touch the ball**.
 The assistant referee must signal "goal kick".



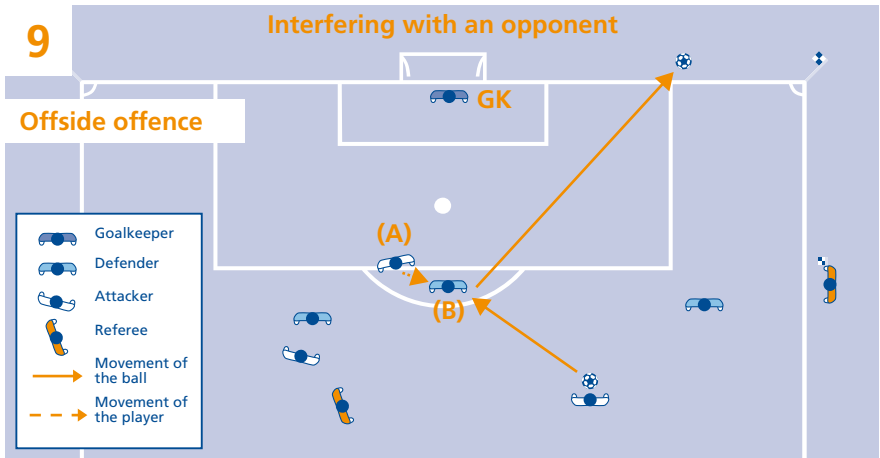
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) is obstructing the goalkeeper's line of vision. He must be penalised because he prevents an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball.



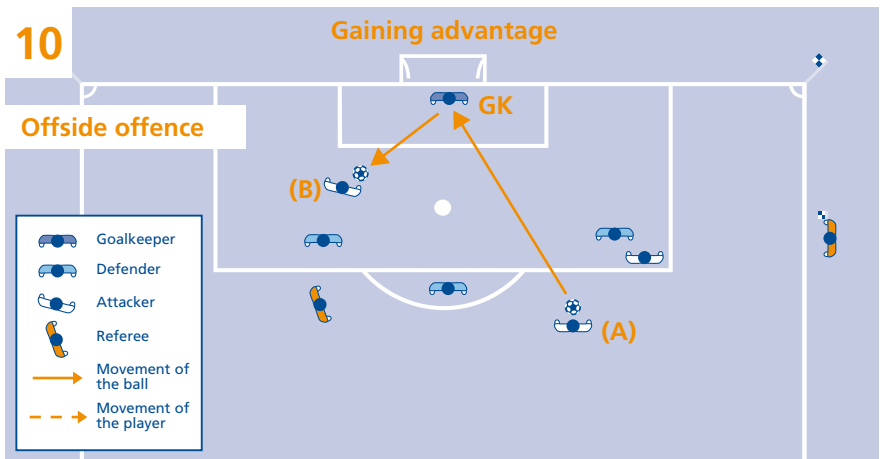
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) is **not** obstructing the goalkeeper's line of vision or making a gesture or movement which deceives or distracts him.



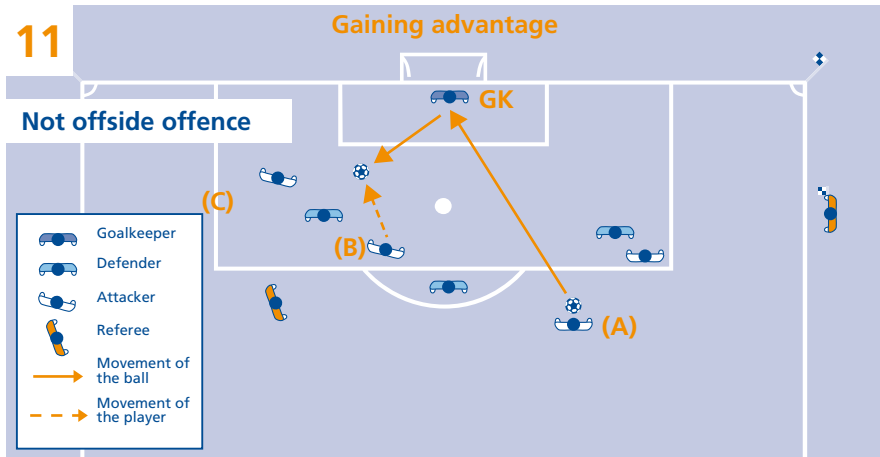
An attacker **in an offside position** (A) runs towards the ball but he does not prevent the opponent from playing or being able to play the ball. (A) is **not** making any gesture or movement which deceives or distracts (B).



An attacker **in an offside position** (A) runs towards the ball preventing the opponent (B) from playing or being able to play the ball.
 (A) is making a gesture or movement which deceives or distracts (B).

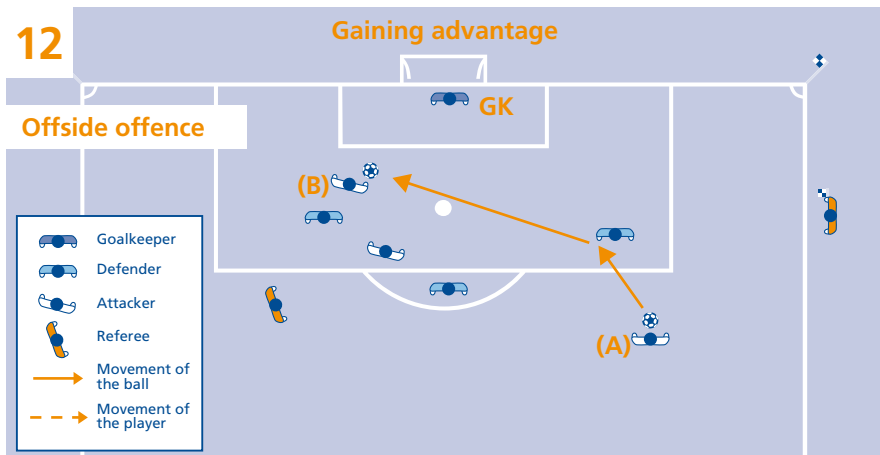


The shot by a team-mate (A) rebounds from the goalkeeper to (B) who is penalised for **playing the ball** having previously been **in an offside position**.



The shot by a team-mate (A) rebounds from the goalkeeper. (B) is in an offside position and plays the ball.

(C) **in an offside position** is not penalised because he did not gain an advantage from being in that position because he did not touch the ball.

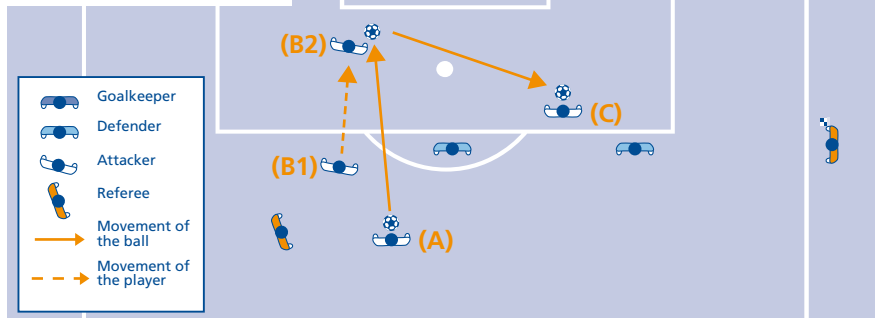


The shot by a team-mate (A) rebounds off an opponent to attacker (B) who is penalised for **playing the ball** having previously been **in an offside position**.

13

Gaining advantage

Not offside offence



An attacker (C) is **in an offside position**, not interfering with an opponent, when a team-mate (A) passes the ball to player (B1) in an onside position who runs towards the opponents' goal and passes the ball (B2) to team-mate (C). Attacker (C) cannot be penalised because when the ball was passed to him, he was **in an onside position**.

Basic requirements for a foul

The following conditions must be met for an offence to be considered a foul:

- it must be committed by a player
- it must occur on the field of play
- it must occur while the ball is in play

If the referee stops play due to an offence committed outside the field of play (when the ball is in play), play must be restarted with a dropped ball from the position of the ball when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Careless, reckless, using excessive force

“Careless” means that the player has shown a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge or that he acted without precaution.

- No further disciplinary sanction is needed if a foul is judged to be careless

“Reckless” means that the player has acted with complete disregard to the danger to, or consequences for, his opponent

- A player who plays in a reckless manner must be cautioned.

“Using excessive force” means that the player has far exceeded the necessary use of force and is in danger of injuring his opponent.

- A player who uses excessive force must be sent off.

Charging an opponent

The act of charging is a challenge for space using physical contact within playing distance of the ball without using arms or elbows.

It is an offence to charge an opponent:

- in a careless manner
- in a reckless manner
- using excessive force

Holding an opponent

Holding an opponent includes the act of preventing him from moving past or around using the hands, the arms or the body.

Referees are reminded to make an early intervention and to deal firmly with holding offences especially inside the penalty area at corner kicks and free kicks.

To deal with these situations:

- the referee must warn any player holding an opponent before the ball is in play
- caution the player if the holding continues before the ball is in play
- award a direct free kick or penalty kick and caution the player if it happens once the ball is in play

If a defender starts holding an attacker outside the penalty area and continues holding him inside the penalty area, the referee must award a penalty kick.

Disciplinary sanctions

- A caution for unsporting behaviour must be issued when a player holds an opponent to prevent him gaining possession of the ball or taking up an advantageous position
- A player must be sent off if he denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by holding an opponent
- No further disciplinary action must be taken in other situations of holding an opponent

Restart of play

- Direct free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick) or a penalty kick if the offence occurred inside the penalty area.

Handling the ball

Handling the ball involves a deliberate act of a player making contact with the ball with his hand or arm. The referee must take the following into consideration:

- the movement of the hand towards the ball (not the ball towards the hand)
- the distance between the opponent and the ball (unexpected ball)
- the position of the hand does not necessarily mean that there is an infringement
- touching the ball with an object held in the hand (clothing, shinguard etc.) counts as an infringement
- hitting the ball with a thrown object (boot, shinguard etc.) counts as an infringement

Disciplinary sanctions

There are circumstances when a caution for unsporting behaviour is required when a player deliberately handles the ball, e.g. when a player:

- deliberately and blatantly handles the ball to prevent an opponent gaining possession
- attempts to score a goal by deliberately handling the ball

A player is sent off, however, if he prevents a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball. This punishment arises not from the act of the player deliberately handling the ball but from the unacceptable and unfair intervention that prevented a goal being scored.

Restart of play

- Direct free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick) or penalty kick

Outside his own penalty area, the goalkeeper has the same restrictions on handling the ball as does any other player. Inside his own penalty area, the goalkeeper cannot be guilty of a handling offence incurring a direct free kick or any misconduct related to handling the ball. He can, however, be guilty of several handling offences that incur an indirect free kick.

Offences committed by goalkeepers

A goalkeeper is not permitted to keep control of the ball in his hands for more than six seconds. A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball:

- while the ball is between his hands or between his hand and any surface (e.g. ground, own body)
- while holding the ball in his outstretched open hand
- while in the act of bouncing it on the ground or tossing it into the air

When a goalkeeper has gained possession of the ball with his hands, he cannot be challenged by an opponent.

A goalkeeper is not permitted to touch the ball with his hand inside his own penalty area in the following circumstances:

- if he handles the ball again after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player:
 - the goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball by touching it with any part of his hands or arms except if the ball rebounds accidentally from him, for example, after he has made a save
 - possession of the ball includes the goalkeeper deliberately parrying the ball
- if he touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate
- if he touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

Restart of play

- Indirect free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)

Offences committed against goalkeepers

- It is an offence for a player to prevent a goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
- A player must be penalised for playing in a dangerous manner if he kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it
- It is an offence to restrict the movement of the goalkeeper by unfairly impeding him, e.g. at the taking of a corner kick

Playing in a dangerous manner

Playing in a dangerous manner is defined as any action that, while trying to play the ball, threatens injury to someone (including the player himself). It is committed with an opponent nearby and prevents the opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury.

A scissors or bicycle kick is permissible provided that, in the opinion of the referee, it is not dangerous to an opponent.

Playing in a dangerous manner involves no physical contact between the players. If there is physical contact, the action becomes an offence punishable with a direct free kick or penalty kick. In the case of physical contact, the referee should carefully consider the high probability that misconduct has also been committed.

Disciplinary sanctions

- If a player plays in a dangerous manner in a “normal” challenge, the referee should not take any disciplinary action. If the action is made with obvious risk of injury, the referee should caution the player
- If a player denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by playing in a dangerous manner, the referee should send off the player

Restart of play

- Indirect free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)
- If there is contact, a different offence has been committed, punishable by a direct free kick or penalty kick.

Impeding the progress of an opponent

Impeding the progress of an opponent means moving into the path of the opponent to obstruct, block, slow down or force a change of direction by an opponent 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.

Shielding the ball is permitted. A player who places himself between an opponent and the ball for tactical reasons has not committed an offence as long as the ball is kept within playing distance and the player does not hold off the opponent with his arms or body. If the ball is within playing distance, the player may be fairly charged by an opponent.

Delaying the restart of play to issue a card

Once the referee has decided to issue a card, whether to caution or send off a player, play must not be restarted until the sanction has been administered.

Cautions for unsporting behaviour

There are different circumstances when a player must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour, e.g. if a player:

- commits in a reckless manner one of the seven offences that incur a direct free kick
- commits a foul for the tactical purpose of interfering with or breaking up a promising attack
- holds an opponent for the tactical purpose of pulling the opponent away from the ball or preventing the opponent from getting to the ball
- handles the ball to prevent an opponent gaining possession or developing an attack (other than the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
- handles the ball in an attempt to score a goal (irrespective of whether or not the attempt is successful).
- attempts to deceive the referee by feigning injury or pretending to have been fouled (simulation)
- changes places with the goalkeeper during play or without the referee's permission
- acts in a manner which shows a lack of respect for the game
- plays the ball when he is walking off the field of play after being granted permission to leave the field of play
- verbally distracts an opponent during play or at a restart
- makes unauthorised marks on the field of play
- uses a deliberate trick while the ball is in play to pass the ball to his own goalkeeper with his head, chest, knee etc. in order to circumvent the Law, irrespective of whether the goalkeeper touches the ball with his hands or not. The offence is committed by the player in attempting to circumvent both the letter and the spirit of Law 12 and play is restarted with an indirect free kick
- uses a deliberate trick to pass the ball to his own goalkeeper to circumvent the Law while he is taking a free kick (after the player is cautioned, the free kick must be retaken)

Celebration of a goal

While it is permissible for a player to demonstrate his joy when a goal has been scored, the celebration must not be excessive.

Reasonable celebrations are allowed, but the practice of choreographed celebrations is not to be encouraged when it results in excessive time-wasting and referees are instructed to intervene in such cases.

A player must be cautioned if:

- in the opinion of the referee, he makes gestures which are provocative, derisory or inflammatory
- he climbs on to a perimeter fence to celebrate a goal being scored
- he removes his shirt or covers his head with his shirt.



- he covers his head or face with a mask or other similar item



Leaving the field of play to celebrate a goal is not a cautionable offence in itself but it is essential that players return to the field of play as soon as possible.

Referees are expected to act in a preventative manner and to exercise common sense in dealing with the celebration of a goal.

Showing dissent by word or action

A player who is guilty of dissent by protesting (verbally or non-verbally) against a referee's decision must be cautioned.

The captain of a team has no special status or privileges under the Laws of the Game but he has a degree of responsibility for the behaviour of his team.

Delaying the restart of play

Referees must caution players who delay the restart of play by tactics such as:

- taking a free kick from the wrong position with the sole intention of forcing the referee to order a retake
- appearing to take a throw-in but suddenly leaving it to one of his team-mates to take
- kicking the ball away or carrying it away with the hands after the referee has stopped play
- excessively delaying the taking of a throw-in or free kick
- delaying leaving the field of play when being substituted
- provoking a confrontation by deliberately touching the ball after the referee has stopped play

Persistent infringement

Referees should be alert at all times to players who persistently infringe the Laws. In particular, they must be aware that, even if a player commits a number of different offences, he must still be cautioned for persistently infringing the Laws.

There is no specific number of infringements which constitutes "persistence" or the presence of a pattern – this is entirely a matter of judgement and must be determined in the context of effective game management.

Serious foul play

A player is guilty of serious foul play if he uses excessive force or brutality against an opponent when challenging for the ball when it is in play.

A tackle that endangers the safety of an opponent must be sanctioned as serious foul play.

Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, from the side or from behind using one or both legs, with excessive force and endangering the safety of an opponent is guilty of serious foul play.

Advantage should not be applied in situations involving serious foul play unless there is a clear subsequent opportunity to score a goal. The referee shall send off the player guilty of serious foul play when the ball is next out of play.

A player who is guilty of serious foul play should be sent off and play is restarted with a direct free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick) or a penalty kick (if the offence occurred inside the offender's penalty area).



Violent conduct

A player is guilty of violent conduct if he uses excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball.

He is also guilty of violent conduct if he uses excessive force or brutality against a team-mate, spectator, match official or any other person.

Violent conduct may occur either on the field of play or outside its boundaries, whether the ball is in play or not.

Advantage should not be applied in situations involving violent conduct unless there is a clear subsequent opportunity to score a goal. The referee must send off the player guilty of violent conduct when the ball is next out of play.

Referees are reminded that violent conduct often leads to mass confrontation, therefore they must try to avert this with active intervention.

A player, substitute or substituted player who is guilty of violent conduct must be sent off.

Restart of play

- If the ball is out of play, play is restarted according to the previous decision
- If the ball is in play and the offence occurred outside the field of play:
 - if the player is already off the field of play and commits the offence, play is restarted with a dropped ball from the position in which the ball was located when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped
 - if the player leaves the field of play to commit the offence, play is restarted with an indirect free kick from the position in which the ball was located when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)
- If the ball is in play and a player commits an offence inside the field of play:
 - against an opponent, play is restarted with a direct free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick) or a penalty kick (if inside the offending player's own penalty area)
 - against a team-mate, play is restarted with an indirect free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)
 - against a substitute or substituted player, play is restarted with an indirect free kick from the position in which the ball was located when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)
 - against the referee or an assistant referee, play is restarted with an indirect free kick from the position where the offence occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)
 - against another person, play is restarted with a dropped ball from the position in which the ball was located when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped

Offences where an object (or the ball) is thrown

If while the ball is in play, a player, substitute or substituted player throws an object at an opponent or other person in a reckless manner, the referee shall stop play and caution the player, substitute or substituted player.

If while the ball is in play, a player, substitute or substituted player throws an object at an opponent or other person using excessive force, the referee shall stop play and send off the player, substitute or substituted player for violent conduct.

Restart of play

- If a player standing inside his own penalty area throws an object at an opponent standing outside the penalty area, the referee restarts play with a direct free kick to the opponents' team taken from the position where the object struck or would have struck the opponent
- If a player standing outside his own penalty area throws an object at an opponent standing inside the penalty area, the referee restarts play with a penalty kick
- If a player standing inside the field of play throws an object at any person standing outside the field of play, the referee restarts play with an indirect free kick, taken from the position in which the ball was located when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)
- If a player standing outside the field of play throws an object at an opponent standing inside the field of play, the referee restarts play with a direct free kick to the opponents' team, taken from the position where the object struck or would have struck the opponent or with a penalty kick (if inside the offending player's own penalty area)
- If a substitute or substituted player standing outside the field of play throws an object at an opponent standing inside the field of play, the referee restarts play with an indirect free kick to the opposing team, taken from the position in which the ball was located when play was stopped (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick)

Denying a goal or a goal-scoring opportunity

There are two sending-off offences that deal with denying an opponent an obvious opportunity to score a goal. It is not necessary for the offence to occur inside the penalty area.

If the referee applies advantage during an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and a goal is scored directly, despite the opponent's handling the ball or fouling an opponent, the player cannot be sent off but he may still be cautioned.

Referees should consider the following circumstances when deciding whether to send off a player for denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity:

- the distance between the offence and the goal
- the likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball
- the direction of the play
- the location and number of defenders
- the offence which denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity may be an offence that incurs a direct free kick or an indirect free kick

Procedure

The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

A free kick can be taken by lifting the ball with a foot or both feet simultaneously.

Feinting to take a free kick to confuse opponents is permitted as part of football. However, if in the opinion of the referee, the feinting is considered an act of unsporting behaviour, the player must be cautioned.

If a player, while correctly taking a free kick, intentionally kicks the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball again but neither in a careless nor a reckless manner nor using excessive force, the referee must allow play to continue.

An indirect free kick must be retaken if the referee fails to raise his arm to indicate that the kick is indirect and the ball is kicked directly into the goal. The initial indirect free kick is not nullified by the referee's mistake.

Distance

If a player decides to take a free kick quickly and an opponent who is less than 9.15 m from the ball intercepts it, the referee must allow play to continue.

If a player decides to take a free kick quickly and an opponent who is near the ball deliberately prevents him taking the kick, the referee must caution the player for delaying the restart of play.

If, when a free kick is taken by the defending team from inside its own penalty area, one or more opponents remain inside the penalty area because the defender decides to take the kick quickly and the opponents did not have time to leave the penalty area, the referee must allow play to continue.

Procedure

Feinting to take a penalty kick to confuse opponents is permitted as part of football. However, if, in the opinion of the referee, the feinting is considered an act of unsporting behaviour, the player must be cautioned.

Preparing for the penalty kick

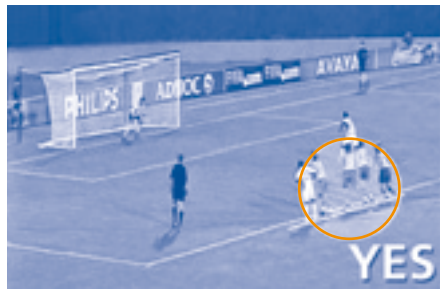
The referee must confirm the following requirements before the penalty kick is taken:

- the kicker is identified
- the ball is properly placed on the penalty mark
- the goalkeeper is on the goal line between the goal posts and facing the kicker
- the team-mates of the kicker and the goalkeeper are:
 - outside the penalty area
 - outside the penalty arc
 - behind the ball

LAW 14 – THE PENALTY KICK

Infringements – After the whistle and before the ball is in play

Infringement for encroachment	Outcome of the kick	
	Goal	No goal
Attacking player	Penalty is retaken	Indirect free kick
Defending player	Goal	Penalty is retaken
Both	Penalty is retaken	Penalty is retaken



Procedures – Infringements

Referees are reminded that opponents may be no closer than 2 metres from the point at which the throw-in is taken. Where necessary, the referee must warn any player within this distance before the throw-in is taken and caution the player if he subsequently fails to retreat to the correct distance. Play is restarted with a throw-in.

If a player, while correctly taking a throw-in, intentionally throws the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball again but neither in a careless nor a reckless manner nor using excessive force, the referee must allow play to continue.

If the ball enters the opponents' goal directly from a throw-in, the referee must award a goal kick. If the ball enters the thrower's own goal directly from a throw-in, the referee must award a corner kick.

If the ball touches the ground before entering the field of play, the throw-in is retaken by the same team from the same position provided that it was taken in line with the correct procedure. If the throw-in is not taken in line with the correct procedure, it is retaken by the opposing team.

Procedures – Infringements

If a player who has taken a goal kick correctly deliberately plays the ball a second time when the ball has left the penalty area before another player has touched it, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team in the position where the second touch occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick). However, if the player touches the ball with his hand, he must be penalised with a direct free kick and a disciplinary sanction if required.

If an opponent enters the penalty area before the ball is in play and is fouled by a defender, the goal kick is retaken and the defender may be cautioned or sent off depending on the nature of the offence.

LAW 17 – THE CORNER KICK

Procedures – Infringements

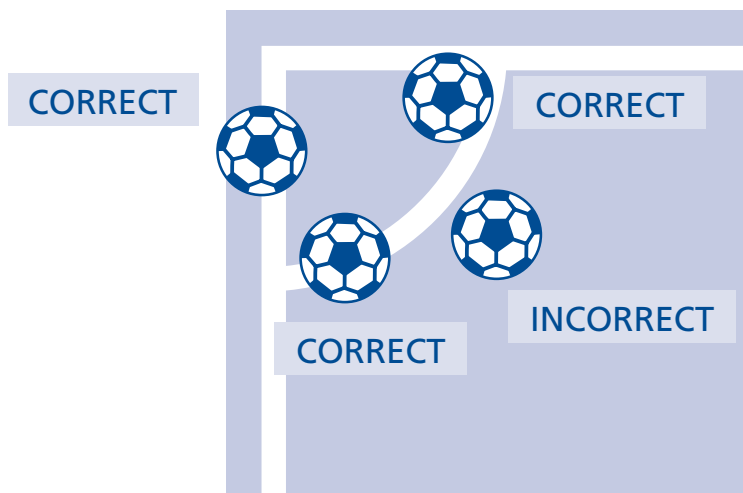
Referees are reminded that opponents must remain at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the corner arc until the ball is in play (the optional marks off the field of play may be used for assistance). Where necessary, the referee must warn any player within this distance before the corner kick is taken and caution the player if he subsequently fails to retreat to the correct distance.

If the kicker touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team in the position where the second touch occurred (see Law 13 – Position of Free Kick).

If a player, while correctly taking a corner kick, intentionally kicks the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball again but neither in a careless nor a reckless manner nor using excessive force, the referee must allow play to continue.

The ball must be placed inside the corner arc and is in play when it is kicked, therefore the ball does not need to leave the corner arc to be in play.

The diagram shows some correct and incorrect positions.



Kicks from the penalty mark

Procedure

- The kicks from the penalty mark are not part of the match
- The penalty area where the kicks from the penalty marks are taking place may be changed only if the goal or the playing surface becomes unusable
- Once all eligible players have taken a kick from the penalty mark, the same sequence does not have to be followed as in the first round of kicks
- Each team is responsible for selecting the players from those on the field of play at the end of the match and the order in which they will take the kicks
- A player other than the goalkeeper who is injured may not be substituted during the taking of kicks from the penalty mark
- If the goalkeeper is sent off during the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, he must be replaced by a player who finished the match
- A player, substitute or substituted player may be cautioned or sent off during the taking of kicks from the penalty mark
- The referee must not abandon the match if a team is reduced to fewer than 7 players during the taking of kicks from the penalty mark
- If a player is injured or sent off during the taking of kicks from the penalty mark and the team has one player less, the referee should not reduce the number of players taking kicks for the other team. An equal number of players from each team is required only at the start of the taking of kicks from the penalty mark