

# 5-a-side Rules

(by 5-a-side.com)

## Clothing / Attire

- Suitable **footwear** must be worn at all times. For artificial pitches, blades and long-studded boots are not appropriate. For indoor pitches on hard surfaces, appropriate indoor footwear must be worn and have non-marking soles.
- All players must wear a **shirt** at all times and teams must make every attempt to ensure that all outfield players play in similar colours. Players must wear bibs where available and instructed by the referee.
- For the safety of all players, all items of **jewellery** should be removed before entering the field of play, including watches. Additionally, it is required that all players wear **shinguards**.
- Where not addressed specifically in these rules, judgements over the suitability of player's equipment are at the discretion of the referee. The referee will ask players to leave the field of play if they are judged not to be complying with these rules.

## Kick-off

- The referee will determine who takes the initial kick-off, either by coin toss or by a pre-determined schedule. If halves are played, the other team will kick-off the second half.
- All players must be inside their own half for kick-off with the non-kicking players at least 2m from the ball. The ball must be played forward and may not be touched again by the taker until kicked by another player. Players **may shoot, and score, directly from the kick-off**.
- After a goal has been scored, play will be restarted by the opposing team taking a kick-off from the centre spot.

## Goalkeeper

- The goalkeeper is the only player on the field permitted to handle the ball and may do so, **only within the area**.
- The goalkeeper is **not permitted to leave the area** and, if found doing so in order to gain an advantage, a penalty kick will be awarded to the opposition.
- Goalkeepers are **not permitted to kick the ball**, except when making a save. Any infringements of this condition will result in an indirect free-kick 2m outside of the area.
- When distributing the ball, it must be done with the hands, in an **underarm bowling motion**. Use of an incorrect action, or the ball going over head height even if a correct action is used, will result in an indirect free-kick being awarded to the opposition 2m outside of the area.

## Pass backs

- A player who has received the ball from the goalkeeper **cannot pass it straight back to that player**. The ball must touch another player (which may

be an opponent) before being passed back. Breach of this rule will result in an indirect free kick being awarded to the attacking team.

### Penalties

- In absence of there being a penalty spot, penalty kicks will be taken in the centre of the pitch, 1 yard back from the edge of the area.
- The **goalkeeper must be standing on the line** when a penalty is taken.
- The penalty taker must be identified to the referee before the penalty is taken. The penalty taker is allowed **one step before striking** the ball.
- Where either side has breached these rules to their advantage, the penalty will be re-taken.

### Area

- Outfield players are **not allowed to enter either area**.
- If an attacking player enters the opponent's area, seeking to gain an advantage, the referee will stop the game and restart play with the goalkeeper. When shooting, the kick must start and finish outside area; if the player's momentum then carries them forward into the area this will not be penalized unless the player is found to be interfering with the play from a position inside the area.
- If a defending player enters their own area, seeking to gain an advantage, a **penalty-kick** will be awarded to the opposition team.

### Substitutions

- **The referee must be notified** whenever there is a substitution of an outfield player. Substitutions require the consent of the referee who will allow the substitution to take place at an appropriate stoppage in the game. The oncoming player must not enter the field until the other player has left."
- The referee must be notified before any change of goalkeeper takes place. **Goalkeepers may only be substituted once during the game**, except in the case where a goalkeeper incurs an injury and does not return to the game.
- All substitutes must stand outside the field of play by the access gate, or behind their goals if there are no barriers.

### Head height rule

- **The ball may not go over head height.** Head height is typically deemed to be the height of the tallest person on the field but shall be subject to the judgement of the referee in all cases. Where the ball goes over head height, an indirect free-kick will be awarded against the player who last made contact with the ball, from the position that they made contact.
- As an exception, **play will continue if the ball goes over head height as a result of making contact with a goalpost or by a goalkeeper** making a save.
- Headers are allowed, provided that they occur within the above rules.

### Use of Barriers (where used)

- Players **must not hold on to the barriers** in order to gain advantage. **Aggressive play against the barrier will not be permitted.**
- Minimal contact should be used against other players against the barriers.

Where a player retrieves a ball from the corner, they will be allowed to take the ball out unhindered by the opposition. Players have a maximum of 5 seconds to bring the ball out of the corner; violation of this time limit will result in a direct free kick being awarded to the opposition.

### **Ball out of play**

- Whilst within the perimeter of the court, the ball is not out of bounds. In the event that the ball leaves the perimeter (other than being kicked over head-height, where such restrictions apply), play shall be restarted with a kick awarded to the appropriate team. This kick is indirect and opponents must be at least 2m from the ball.

### **Fair Play**

- For the safety of all players, **slide tackles are not allowed**.
- Violent and aggressive play; unsporting behaviour; and foul and abusive language will not be tolerated. Players exhibiting such behaviour will be penalized by the referee.
- The referee may punish infringements with a yellow or red card. A **yellow card will result in the player being sin-binned** for two minutes, in which time they may not be replaced by another player. The sin-binned player may only re-enter the field of play when the referee indicates they may do so.
- Where a player is given a **red card, they must leave the field immediately** and may play no further part in the game. They may not be replaced by another player.
- In the event of persistent or extreme abuse or bad behaviour, the referee has the power to abandon the game which may result in the disqualification of one or both teams from the competition.

### **Free Kicks**

- Players must retreat at least **2m** away from where the ball is kicked, for any free-kick.
- If a free-kick is awarded within 2m of the edge of the area, it should be moved back so that it is 2m from the edge of the area, allowing a defensive wall to form in front.
- Failure to retreat the required distance, or **in the event of dissent, the kick may be moved forward** by two yards. The ball may be moved forward as many times as is necessary where repeated failure to retreat or dissent is shown. If, in moving the kick forward, it would be within the area a penalty-kick may be awarded instead.
- All free kicks are direct, except where specified above (ball played over head height; goalkeeper not playing the ball underarm; player returning the ball directly to the goalkeeper)

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