

Devon Soccer Association



DSA / Parkland Rules 2021

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*Disclaimer: Subject to change



RULES

Local Modifications to the Laws of the Game:

The normal rules and laws of the game of soccer will apply for all age groups subject to the following modifications where applicable. When referred to, micro-field includes U4 and U6, mini-field includes U8 and U10, and full-field refers to U12 and above. The FIFA laws of the game can be downloaded from our website, and it is strongly recommended that all officials, coaches, referees, and assistant referees (linesmen) do so.

1. The game shall be divided into two halves with a 5-minute break at half time (u4 exception). The restart of play for the second half shall be by the team that did not kick off the first half.
 - a. U4 – one 15-minute half
 - b. U6 – two 15-minute halves
 - c. U8/U10 - two 25-minute halves
 - d. U12/U15 – two 30-minute halves

The referee may make an allowance of a few minutes added time at the end of either half to compensate for any excessive time lost during play. (See guidelines to help explain the rules #13).

2. Field size

- a. U4 – 60 x 90 feet
- b. U6 – 90 x 120 feet
- c. U8 and U10 – 120 x 180 feet
- d. U12 and U15 – Regulation full size field. See FIFA laws.

3. Goal posts & ball sizes shall be:

- a. U4 – pug net, size 3 ball
- b. U6 – pug net, size 3 ball
- c. U8 – 5 x 8 feet, size 3 ball
- d. U10 – 5 x 8 feet, size 3 ball
- e. U12– Regulation full size net. See FIFA laws, size 4 ball.
- f. U15 – Regulation full size net. See FIFA laws, size 5 ball.

4. Format:

- a. U4 – 3 vs 3 no goalkeeper
- b. U6 – 5 vs 5
- c. U8/U10 – 7 vs 7
- d. U12/U15 – 11 vs 11

5. Unlimited substitution is allowed, but only when the ball is out of play (see guidelines to help explain the laws #2), and upon the approval of the referee.

Modifications for Micro Field (U4 and U6) only:

6. The toss of a coin will be used to determine who kicks off and starts the game.
7. After a goal, the game will restart from center.



8. Praise should be given regardless of which team scores.
9. Goalkeeper
 - a. U4 no goalkeeper to encourage as many goals as possible.
 - b. U6 goalkeeper can use their hands to stop the ball. They can either kick or throw ball back into play.
10. When the ball goes out of play (out the side or ends), coach should blow the whistle to stop players movement.
 - a. U4 a coach or spectator should throw the ball back into play.
 - b. U6 a player should do a throw in. Feet planted on the ground, hold ball with two hands straight over head, throw forward, without moving feet.
11. No referees, one coach from each team should work together to run the game.
12. Players are encouraged to play in all positions, as set positions are fostered in U12 and up.
13. No limit on substitutions, allowed anytime during game.
14. Rotate players approximately every 3 minutes, only players sitting near the team bench(blanket) will be rotated into play.

Modifications for Mini Field (U8 and U10) only:

15. The normal throw-in rule is to apply with one re-throw allowed for mini field only.
16. No offside rule shall apply.
17. The goalkeeper cannot deliberately touch the ball with his/her hands or arms outside the 6-yard goal area.
18. The goalkeeper only, is to restart play within the 6-yard goal area.
19. No goal can be scored from within the opposing team's 6-yard goal area. The last touch by the attacking player must occur outside the goal area for a goal to be allowed. If, however, the ball is subsequently touched by a defending player inside his or her own goal area before the ball enters the goal, then the goal will stand. All players can be within and play the ball within the goal area. Should the ball be put into the goal from within the goal area by an attacking player, then play should restart with a goal kick. (See Guideline #4 below).
20. Only one coach or team official from each team can be on the field of play during the game, and only the referee may carry a whistle. The coach or team official on the field of play may not stand or be within the 6-yard goal area during play and cannot be behind the goal line.
21. Reckless, dangerous, or careless tackles or challenges will not be tolerated and may result in a yellow card or ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee.

Modifications for Full Field (U12 and U15) only:

22. All full field teams must have jerseys with visible numbers on them.



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23. A team captain must be designated by each team for each game and the league strongly encourages changing the captain for each game.
24. The coach may not approach the referee during the game. The team captain is the only person allowed to address the referee, and in an appropriate manner. The coach must go through the team captain to ask the referee any question; however, the referee may approach the coach.
25. Should circumstances at game time be such that one team has insufficient players to play with 11 a side, the respective team coaches can decide to play with 9 or 10 players per team, at their discretion and mutual agreement. As we are a fun ball community it is suggested to share players to even out the numbers on each team, if coaches agree.
26. Reckless, dangerous, or careless tackles or challenges will not be tolerated & may result in a yellow card or ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee.
27. Coaches and players must not go more than 20 feet away from the halfway line and are not allowed to cross the halfway line. Opposing coaches and players should be on the same side of the field.

Guidelines to Help Explain the Laws of the Game

The following guidelines may help to clarify some of the FIFA laws of the game as they currently stand.

1. The toss of the coin will be used to determine who kicks off and starts the game. The team that wins the coin toss decides which end to attack in the first half. The team that loses the coin toss kicks off the game.
2. The ball is in play once the kickoff has been taken at the start of the game and does not cease to be in play until either a) it wholly crosses either touch line or either goal line, or b) when the referee blows his / her whistle to stop play for an infraction of the rules. In either case, the ball is in play again once the game has restarted in the appropriate manner.
3. When the ball is in play, it is in play for all players, including the goalkeeper, within his or her penalty area and/or goal area even when the goalkeeper has the ball in control with his/her hands or has the ball Covered with anything but his/her feet. However, when the goalkeeper has the ball under control or covered, players must not prevent him/her from releasing the ball. Outside of the penalty area in full field or goal area in mini field the goalkeeper cannot deliberately touch the ball with his/her hands or arms, the same as every other player. Should the goalkeeper do this, then it is a handball offence (see Guideline # 8 below).
4. A goal kick is called when a player touches the ball either deliberately or accidentally and it goes out of play, either on the ground or in the air, over his/her **OPPOSING TEAM'S** goal line but not into the goal. The game then restarts by a player of the team defending that end of the field kicking the ball from off the ground from any point within the goal area at that end. At the time that the kick is taken, no players other than the goalkeeper and/or the player taking the kick may be inside the penalty area in full field, or the goal area in mini field. Once the goal kick is taken, the kicker may NOT touch the ball again until it has touched another player on either team, and no other player may touch the ball until it has passed outside of the penalty area in full field or the goal area in mini field. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick without the ball being touched by another player before it enters the goal, however, should a player take a goal kick and the ball then somehow travel back into his/her own goal without being Touched by another player then a goal is NOT awarded.



5. A penalty kick is awarded when a player is guilty of committing any of the **DIRECT** free kick offences (see FIFA laws of the game, law 12) inside his/her **OWN** team's penalty area in full field or goal area in mini field, when the ball is in play and irrespective of where the ball is at the time. Penalty kicks to be taken from the marked spot 12 yards directly in front of the midpoint of the goal in full field, or from a point 6 yards directly in front of the mid-point of the goal in mini field. A penalty kick should be direct on goal. All players except the defending goalkeeper are to remain behind the penalty kicker, outside of the penalty area in full field or goal area in mini field and at least ten yards away from the ball until the ball has been kicked. The penalty kick may be taken by any player on the team to whom the penalty kick has been awarded. Once the penalty kick is taken, the kicker may **NOT** touch the ball again until it has touched another player on either team. Before the kick is taken, the defending goalkeeper must be positioned on his/her goal line and must not move forward off the goal line until the ball has been kicked. Once the ball is kicked, it is in play.
6. A corner kick is to be called when a player (including a goalkeeper) touches the ball either deliberately or accidentally and it goes out of play, either on the ground or in the air, over his/her **OWN TEAM'S** goal line but not into the goal. The game then re-starts with the corner kick being taken from off the ground at the corner nearest to the point at which the ball crossed the line, by a player of the team that is attacking that end of the field. At the time that the kick is taken, no player on the team defending the corner kick may be within 10 yards of the ball. Once the corner kick is taken, the kicker may **NOT** touch the ball again until it has touched another player on either team. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick without the ball being touched by another player before it enters the goal.
7. Reckless, dangerous, or careless tackles or challenges will not be tolerated and may result in a yellow card or ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee. A referee may consider a challenge or tackle to fall under this description if, for instance, a player is overly forceful or is not in control of his / her own body or is acting in a way that has potential to cause injury – either to themselves or another player - as they make a tackle or challenge.
8. Handball is called when a player (other than a goalkeeper **WITHIN** his/her **OWN** penalty area or goal area) **DELIBERATELY** uses his/her hand **OR ARM** to control or propel the ball in some way. Handball should **NOT** be called when the ball strikes the hand or arm of a player in such a way that is unintentional, for example if the ball takes a deflection and flies up quickly hitting a player's hand giving him/her no chance to react. Should a player use his/her hand or arm in a way that is to defend his/her body (for example to stop the ball from hitting him/her hard in the face) then the handball call should be at the discretion of the referee. Factors that the referee should consider in this kind of circumstance are the time that the player had to react before deflecting the ball with his/her hand (i.e., whether the act was deliberate or just instinctive) and the age group of the players (more leniency in this circumstance should be shown to the younger age groups.) Should the referee call a handball offence then play restarts with a **DIRECT** free kick awarded to the opposing team of the player who committed the handball offence.
9. Two yellow cards in the same game are the equivalent of one red card and will result in a sending off (ejection). As per League Regulation #21 a red card ejection for a player is not only for the existing game but will result in a suspension for the following game as well.



10. A throw in is called when the ball goes out of play, either on the ground or in the air, by crossing over either of the touch lines. The throw in is awarded to the opposing team of the player who last touched the ball, either deliberately or accidentally, before it went out of play. The correct procedure for taking a throw in is as follows:
- The throw in must be taken from the point on the touch line at which the ball went out of play.
 - The player taking the throw in must be standing with some part of **BOTH** of his / her feet touching the ground either behind or on the touch line as he/she throws the ball.
 - The player taking the throw in must be facing the field of play when throwing in the ball.
 - The ball must be held with both hands when thrown in.
 - The ball must be thrown from behind and over the head.
 - The ball must be cleanly thrown, and not dropped or pushed down onto the ground.
 - Once a throw in is taken, the thrower may **NOT** touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

A goal may **NOT** be scored against either team directly from a throw in. After it is thrown in, the ball must touch another player before it enters the goal for a goal to stand. If the ball is thrown directly into the goal, then play restarts with either a goal kick, or corner kick depending on which end of the field that this occurred. For example, if a player throws the ball directly into his/her opponent's goal then play restarts with a goal kick. If he/she throws it directly into his / her own goal then play restarts with a corner kick, in accordance with points 4 and 6 above.

11. In full field a goal may be scored from **ANYWHERE** on the field, including within the penalty area or goal area, provided that no infraction of the laws has occurred while scoring the goal.
12. A goalkeeper may **NOT** handle the ball (except to make a save to prevent a goal) if the last touch to him/her was an **INTENTIONAL kick** of the ball by a member of his/her **OWN** team. A player may however play the ball to his/her goalkeeper by means of heading the ball, kneeing the ball or chesting the ball and the goalkeeper may handle the ball in this circumstance. The goalkeeper may also handle the ball if the last touch was via an unintentional deflection off the foot off one of his / her own players, or after any touch from an opposing player. Should an infraction occur under this rule then play is restarted with an **INDIRECT** free kick awarded to the opposing team to that of the goalkeeper who handled the ball.
13. The referee may make an allowance of a few minutes added time at the end of either half to compensate for time lost during play. However, certain stoppages in play, such as the ball going out of play, are part of the game and time should not be added to allow for this unless there has been an excessive stoppage (e.g., ball being kicked out over a fence or into trees and having to be found and recovered or replaced.) Time taken over substitutions is also considered to be part of the game and should not be included in time to be added on. Examples of where a referee should allow extra stoppage time, include but are not limited to; time lost due to an injured player receiving attention; time lost to a stoppage in the game due to an outside interference; and time lost due to a player deliberately wasting time by not restarting the game promptly after the ball has gone out of play.



[Appendix to the Manual: The Offside Rule Explained](#)

Before reading this appendix, please take the time to download the pdf document of the laws of the game from our website:

FIFA law #11 (offside) states that:

A player **is in an offside position** if:

- He is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and second-last opponent

A player **is not in an offside position** if:

- He is in his own half of the field of play or
- He is level with the second-last opponent or
- He is level with the last two opponents

Put simply, if a player is in a position that is in his / her opponent's half of the field, **AND** ahead of the second- last defender on the opposing team, **AND** ahead of the ball then he / she is in an offside position. Considering that the last defender back on a team is usually the goalkeeper, the second-last defender as referred to here will usually refer to the last outfield player back on the defending team. During the game, the assistant referees (linesmen) will usually take up a position on the touch line that keeps them level with this furthest back outfield defender in the half in which they are officiating, in order that they can accurately see which (if any) attacking players are in offside positions.

However – and this is the important part – **it is not an offence for a player merely to be in an offside position.**

For an offside offence to occur and a team be penalized for having a player who is judged to be offside, the following conditions must be met:

At the time that another player on the SAME team plays the ball, the player in the offside position must be interfering with active play in some way. For example, by playing or attempting to play the ball, by interfering with or having an influence on the actions of an opposing player, or by gaining a clear advantage from being in the offside position.

Pages 104 to 110 of the FIFA laws of the game document show thirteen different diagrams displaying different examples of how this law should be applied and put into practice in accordance with those conditions as outlined above. Here are some important points to remember when looking at this.

1. **A player does NOT have to touch the ball to be called offside.** Examples 4, 6 and 9 in the FIFA document demonstrate how this is so. In example 4, player A is gaining an advantage from being in the offside position because he has a “head start” on the defenders and has a clear and unchallenged run at the ball. In example 6, player A has interfered with an opposing player by blocking the goalkeeper's line of vision, rendering the goalkeeper less able to deal with the shot at his goal. In example 9, player A has had an influence on the actions of opposing player B by running at him and putting him under pressure to play the ball more quickly.



2. **Remember, an offside offence is judged according to the relative positions of players and the ball AT THE TIME THAT THE BALL IS PLAYED.** Example 13 in the FIFA document demonstrates this. Player B is not offside, because at the time that the ball was played by player A, he was at point B1, which is not in an offside position. Because of this, it does not matter that he subsequently runs on and touches the ball at point B2, which is in a position in advance of the second-last defender (or last outfield defender as discussed above). Player C is also not offside. At the time that the ball is played by player A, he is in an offside position, but at that time he is not interfering with active play because he is neither playing or attempting to play the ball, nor interfering with or influencing an opponent, not gaining any advantage from being in that position. By the time the ball is played for a second time, this time by player B at point B2, player C is still not offside because he is now behind the ball, and therefore NOT in an offside position.

3. **The ball is considered to have been played when a player kicks, heads or otherwise legally propels the ball in such a manner that it is released from his / her control,** for example when attempting to pass the ball to another player, taking a shot at goal, or just kicking the ball to another part of the field or out of play. The ball being dribbled (kept at close control whilst running or walking) by a player does NOT constitute the ball being played. Therefore, a team may have one or more players in offside positions while another player is dribbling the ball, and none of these players may be called offside until such time as the player dribbling the ball plays the ball in the manner outlined in this point – if they are still in offside positions at that time.

4. **An offside player may not “tag up” in hockey style to avoid being offside.** Take example 4 in the FIFA document. At the time that the ball is played in that example, player A is offside, as discussed in point 1. After the ball has been played, player A may NOT step back to be level with the last outfield defender and then set off in pursuit of the ball again in the manner of a hockey forward skating back to touch the blue line before going after the puck. The offside offence has already occurred in this example and cannot be overturned.