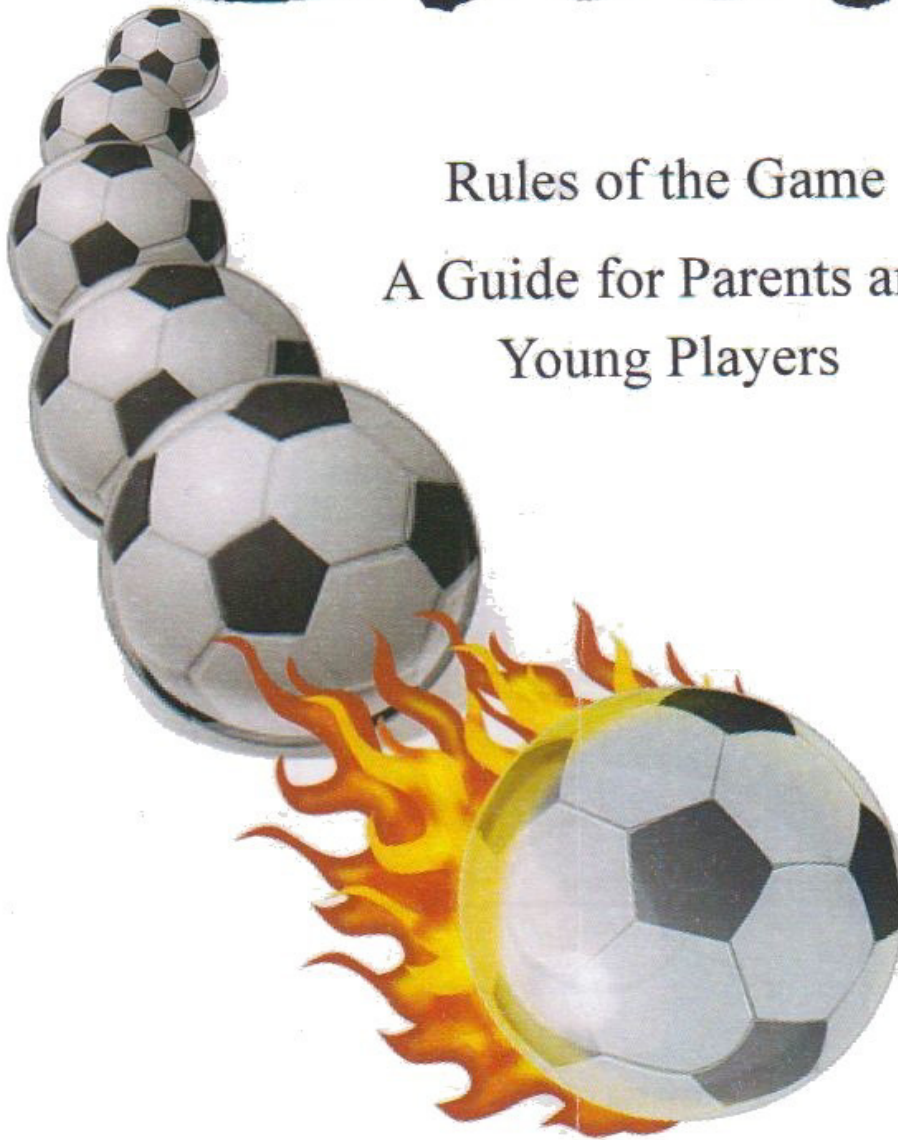


Swift Current Soccer Association

# Soccer

Rules of the Game

A Guide for Parents and  
Young Players



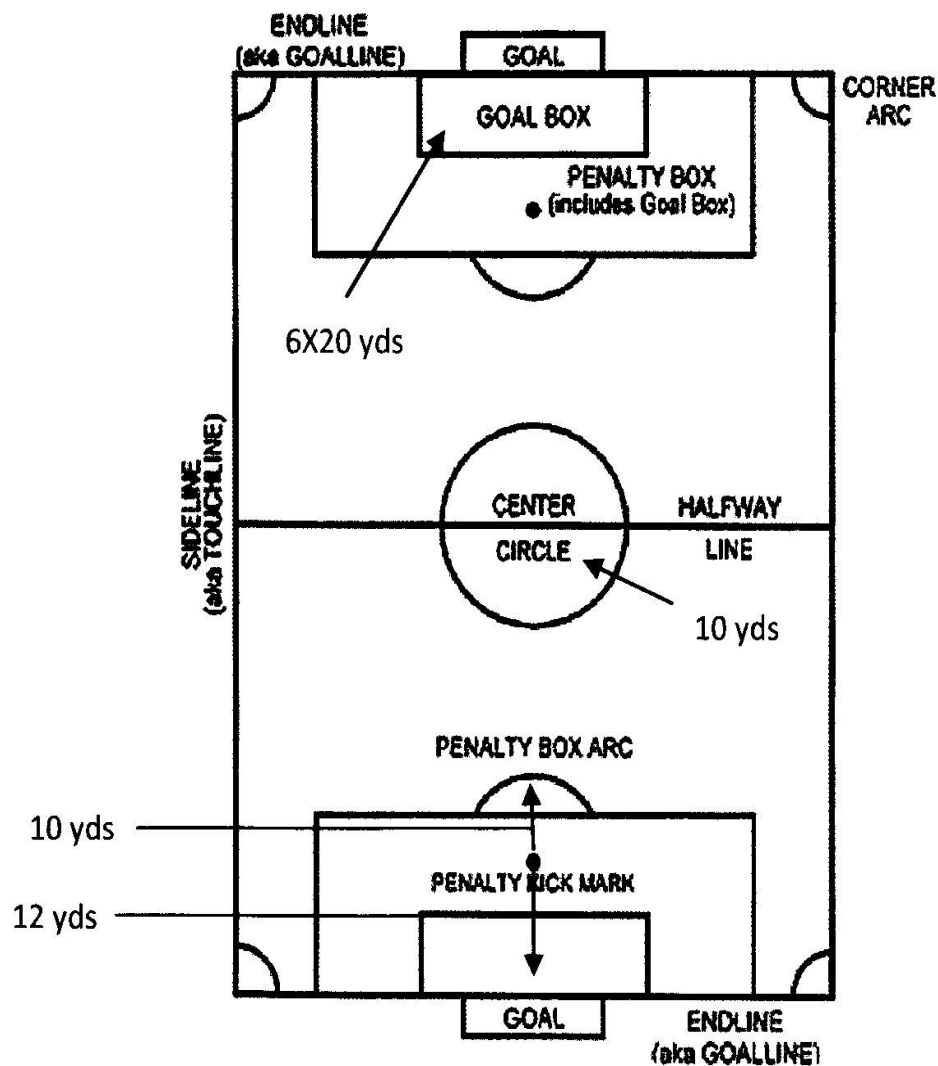
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# The Field

- Soccer is played on a rectangular field which is divided into two halves.
- The most important lines on the playing area are those that mark the penalty areas.
- Only the size of the goals, the penalty area, the goal area and the location of the penalty mark are measured exactly.
- All other measurements fall within a range.



# The Referee

- The game is officiated by a referee and possibly two assistant referees.
- The referee ensures that the game is fair and safe by enforcing the Laws of the Game.
- The referee's decisions are final and may not be questioned by players or team officials.
- The referee may change his or her mind only if play has not restarted.
- The referee is the record keeper and the sole judge of playing time and the final score.

# The Teams and Players

- The game is normally played between two teams of eleven players.
- In Saskatchewan, teams of players under 16 years of age may use fewer players, play on a smaller field with smaller goals and use a smaller ball.
- Players must not wear anything dangerous to themselves or other players (such as jewelry or earrings).
- Players must wear shinpads for safety reasons and the shinpads must be covered by the socks.
- One player in each team wears a different colour shirt from all the other players. That player is the goalkeeper.
- Within his or her penalty area the goalkeeper may catch, punch, or otherwise handle the ball.
- The goalkeeper may play outside his or her own penalty area but is then treated like any other player.

# Starting the Game

- The game is started with a kick from the centre mark.
- A kick from the centre mark is also used to restart the game after a goal and is taken by the team against whom the goal was scored.
- A kick from the centre also starts the second half.
- At the kick from the centre, each team must be in its own half.
- The referee signals for the kick to be taken.
- The game starts or restarts once the ball is kicked and moves.
- The kicker may not kick the ball a second time until another player from either team touches it.



# Restarting After The Ball Goes Off The Field

- If the ball goes over the goal-line and was last touched by an attacker (and a goal was not scored), play is restarted by the defenders taking a goal kick from anywhere inside the goal area.
- All attacking players must be outside the penalty area and may not enter until the ball is in play.
- The ball is in play once it is kicked and moves.
- If the ball goes over the goal line and was last touched by a defender (and a goal was not scored), play is restarted with a corner kick taken by the attacking team.
- If the ball goes over the sideline (touchline) and was last touched by a player of one team, a throw-in is taken from where the ball left the field by a member of the other team.

# The Throw-in

- The player throwing the ball into play after it has left the field over the sideline, must throw the ball:
  - With both hands.
  - From behind the head.
  - Must keep some part of both feet on the ground while throwing the ball.
  - Must keep his or her feet outside the field of play during the throw.



# Scoring

- A goal is scored when all of the ball passes over the goal line into the goal
- This is the only method of scoring in soccer.
- The team with the greatest number of goals wins the game.

# Free Kicks and Fouls

- A free kick can only be awarded after a foul against an opponent.
- Free kicks, both direct and indirect, are taken at the place where the foul occurred.
- The referee has discretionary power to let play continue if, in his or her opinion, the team offended against would lose an advantage through a stoppage in play.
- The referee may also punish the offending player by a caution (yellow card) or by ejection from the game (red card).
- If play continues due to an advantage, the card will be shown to the offending player at the next stoppage of play.

## Free Kicks and Fouls Continued

- There are two kinds of free kicks:
- A **DIRECT free kick** from which a goal may be scored directly without anyone else touching the ball.
- An **INDIRECT free kick** from which a goal cannot be scored directly. One of the players from either team must touch the ball first.
- A **direct free kick** is awarded when there is illegal or unsafe contact between a player and an opponent.
- Although players frequently come into contact with each other by chance, such as in a goalmouth scramble or when attempting to head the ball, a **direct free kick** will be awarded if the contact is carried out in a careless, reckless or dangerous manner, or when the ball is not within playing distance.
- The shoulder-to-shoulder charge is the only legal form of body contact in soccer but if it is carried out in a reckless, violent, or dangerous manner or when the ball is not within playing distance it will also be punished by a **direct free kick**.
- A **direct free kick** will be awarded to the team whose player has been fouled by elbowing, pushing, tripping, body-checking, or jumping at by an opponent.
- Charging in the back is especially dangerous and is not allowed.
- A **direct free kick** is awarded if a player (other than the goalkeeper inside his own penalty area) intentionally handles the ball.
- If the ball accidentally hits the hand or arm, it is not an offence and play is not stopped.
- An **indirect free kick** is awarded for offences that do not involve bodily contact and other technical offences.
- An **indirect free kick** is awarded for an offside.

- An **indirect free kick** is awarded during any restart of play (except from a drop ball) when a player taking the kick or throw-in kicks or touches the ball a second time before another player of either side touches the ball.
- An **indirect free kick** is awarded when a player deliberately obstructs an opponent.
- An **indirect free kick** is awarded for dangerous play where there is no contact between the player and an opponent.
- An **indirect free kick** is awarded for delaying the game as in the case of a goalkeeper holding the ball too long.
- The referee will indicate an **indirect free kick** by raising one arm directly above his or her head.

## Penalty Kicks

- If a foul punishable by a direct free kick has been committed by the defending team within its own penalty area, a direct free kick, called a penalty kick, is taken from a spot called the penalty mark situated, on a full size field, 12 yards (10.97 metres) in front of the goal.
- The penalty kick is one-on-one between the kicker and the goalkeeper.
- The goalkeeper must stay on the goal-line until the ball is kicked
- All other players must stay outside the penalty area, at least 10 yards (9.15 metres) from the penalty mark, and further from the goal-line than the ball until the ball is kicked.
- The ball is in play from the moment it is kicked.





# Offside

- A player is in an offside position if he or she is nearer to the opponent's goal line unless:
  - The player is in his or her own half of the field.
  - There are at least two players of the opposing team (one of which may be the goal keeper) nearer to the goal-line than the attacking player.
- It is not an offense to be in an offside position.
- A player in an offside position will become offside if, in the opinion of the referee, that player is:
  - Interfering with play.
  - Interfering with an opponent.
  - Gaining an advantage from being in that position.
- A player is judged offside at the moment the ball is played by a member of his or her team, not when or where he or she is when he or she receives the ball.
- A player cannot be offside if he or she receives the ball directly from a throw-in, a goal-kick, or a corner kick, or directly from an opposing player.



# Substitution Procedures

- For very young and inexperienced players, substitutions are informal and may be on-the-fly with prior permission of the referee, or from the bench at a stoppage. For older and more experienced players, the procedure becomes more formal.
- The number of substitutions at any one time and in total is determined by the competition rule.
- Substitutes inform the fourth referee (if present) then assemble at the centre, behind the centre flag.
- A substitution may be made only during a stoppage in play.
- If present, the assistant referee signals that a substitution has been requested.
- The referee signals to allow the substitution. The referee may refuse substitutions at that stoppage under certain circumstances i.e. the substitute is not ready to enter the field of play or if it gives an unfair advantage or if it will unduly delay the game.
- Before entering the field of play, the substitute must wait for the player being replaced to leave the field.
- The player being substituted must leave the field of play at the closest point on the side lines. A signal to the referee that he or she has left the field will help the referee. He or she does not have to leave at the centre as this may cause unnecessary delay in the game.
- The substitute must enter the field of play at the halfway line.
- A substitute who has not completed the substitution procedure by stepping onto the field of play cannot restart play by taking a throw-in or corner kick.
- If the 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.
- If the goalkeeper is substituted the referee must be informed of the change before play restarts.