

WALKING FOOTBALL

LAWS OF THE GAME

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The FA

FOR ALL



A UNIFIED SET OF LAWS WILL BREED GROWTH

Unity has always been a cornerstone of football's success. The teams that work together with a shared understanding and common purpose are often the most successful. The same principle applies to the game itself.

Throughout football's history, a consistent set of Laws has enabled the sport to grow, flourish and connect people across communities, regions and nations. Regardless of where the game is played, a shared understanding of the Laws helps ensure fairness, integrity and enjoyment for all participants.

As Walking Football continues to grow, it is important that the game is supported by the same foundation. Driven by the passion and dedication of players, clubs, leagues, referees and volunteers across the country, Walking Football has become one of the most successful and inclusive formats of the game. To realise its full potential, however, consistency in how the game is played is essential.

These Laws represent a single, unified framework for Walking Football across England. They have been developed through collaboration and partnership across the walking football community and have evolved through extensive consultation, strong governance and the valuable input of those who play, officiate, organise and support the game at every level.

Equally important is our responsibility to promote player welfare and help ensure that walking football is played in a safe environment. A common set of Laws is fundamental to achieving both aims.

This publication contains the official Walking Football Laws of the Game and provides a framework for use across all competitions. While some local adaptations may be necessary to reflect specific facilities or competition requirements (only those listed in Appendix A), these Laws establish a consistent national standard that supports the development of the game for everyone.

Together, through one set of Laws and a shared commitment to the future of the game, we can continue to grow Walking Football FOR ALL.

General principle

Except where otherwise stated, the IFAB Laws of Association Football apply; it should be noted that there is no offside in Walking Football.

LAW 1
THE FIELD OF PLAY (PLAYING AREA)

BARRIERS

Walking Football may be played with or without barriers but without barriers is recommended as the safest option.

DIMENSIONS

The playing area must be rectangular; the length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

For 5-a-side and 6-a-side football the following dimensions are recommended:

Length: minimum 25m
maximum 50m

Width: minimum 16m
maximum 35m

For 7-a-side football the following dimensions are recommended:

Length: minimum 50m
maximum 60m

Width: minimum 30m
maximum 40m

MARKINGS

The playing area is marked with lines. The two longer boundary lines are called touchlines. The two shorter lines are called goal lines.

The playing area is divided into two halves by the halfway line.

All lines must be of the same width which must not be more than 12cm.

The centre mark is at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of 3m is marked around it.

THE PENALTY AREA

A penalty area is defined at each end of the playing area as follows:

A semi-circle of 6m radius is drawn from the centre of each goal line. The extremities of these semi-circles should reach the goal line, barrier or wall, regardless of whether or not the goal posts encroach onto the playing area.

A penalty mark is made 7m from the midpoint between the goal posts.

THE CORNER ARC

Where barriers do not surround the playing area, a quarter circle with a radius of 25cm from each corner is drawn inside the playing area in each corner.

GOALS

A goal must be placed on the centre of each goal line.

A goal consists of two vertical posts equidistant from each corner and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar.

The distance (inside measurement) between the posts is 5m (maximum) – 3m (minimum); the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is 2m (maximum) – 1.20m (minimum).

The goal posts and the crossbars have the same width and depth as the lines. Nets may be attached to the goals and the ground behind the goal; they must be properly supported and must not interfere with the goalkeeper.

SAFETY

The goals may be portable and must meet British Standards and be anchored securely to the ground during play as per Health and Safety requirements. Where there are no barriers a suitable run off should be provided around the playing area. The FA recommends a minimum of 3m; if this distance cannot be met a suitable run off should be provided subject to a risk assessment.

PLAYING SURFACE

Where natural turf is not used the surface must be smooth, flat and non-abrasive; the use of wood or artificial material is recommended.

LAW 2
THE BALL

QUALITIES AND MEASUREMENTS

The ball is:

- spherical
- made of leather or other suitable material
- appropriate in size to the group playing

REPLACEMENT OF A DEFECTIVE BALL

If the ball becomes defective:

- play is stopped and
- restarted by dropping the replacement ball where the original ball became defective

If the ball becomes defective at a restart, the re-start is retaken.

If the ball becomes defective during a penalty kick or kicks from the penalty mark as it moves forward and before it touches a player, crossbar or goalposts the penalty kick is retaken.

The ball may not be changed during the match without the referee's permission.



LAW 3
THE PLAYERS

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than the following number of players and substitutes for each format:

- 5-a-side = 5 players per team and 5 substitutes (total of 10 players)
- 6-a-side = 6 players per team and 5 substitutes (total of 11 players)
- 7-a-side = 7 players per team and 5 substitutes (total of 12 players)

A match should not be considered valid if a team is permanently reduced by:

- more than two players for 5–a-side
- more than two players for 6–a-side
- more than three players for 7–a-side

However this should only apply when players are sent off (not temporarily dismissed) and/or unable to continue through injury, illness etc.

NUMBER OF SUBSTITUTES

The number of substitutions made during a match is unlimited. A player who has been substituted may return as a substitute for another player.

SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURE

Substitutions should take place when play is stopped or during play if an additional official is involved in refereeing the match; this will be determined by the competition rules.

The substitution procedure is as follows:

- the player being substituted should leave by the nearest point on the boundary line (where barriers are not used) unless the referee gives permission otherwise because of safety, injury etc.
- the player entering the playing area may not do so until the player leaving the playing area has passed completely over the boundary line
- where barricades are used the players must use the opening onto the playing area
- the substitution is complete when the substitute enters the playing area, from which moment the replaced player becomes a substituted player, and the substitute becomes a player and can take any restart.

All substituted players and substitutes are subject to the referee's authority whether they play or not.

CHANGING THE GOALKEEPER

Any of the players or substitutes, may change places with the goalkeeper if:

- the referee is informed before the change is made
- the change is made during a stoppage in play

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

If, while a substitution is being made, a substitute enters the playing area before the player being replaced has completely left:

- play is stopped
- the player being replaced is instructed to leave the playing area
- the substitute is temporarily dismissed for the agreed period
- play is restarted by an indirect free kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the ball was situated when the match was stopped. However, if the ball was inside the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken 3.5m from the penalty area line, at the place nearest to the position of the ball when play was stopped.

Where barricades are used if, while a substitution is being made, a substitute enters the playing area or a player being replaced leaves the playing area from a place other than the recognised opening in the barricades:

- play is stopped
- the substitute/player is temporarily dismissed for the agreed period
- play is restarted by an indirect free kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the ball was situated when the match was stopped. However, if the ball was inside the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken 3.5m from the penalty area line, at the place nearest to the position of the ball when play was stopped.

LAW 4
THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

SAFETY

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous.

All items of jewellery (necklaces, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc.) are forbidden and must be removed.

The exception to this rule is if a plain wedding band is not able to be physically removed it is permitted to be covered. More intricate wedding bands with protruding stones or sharper edges must be sufficiently covered to avoid any risk of injury to other players. The use of tape, gloves or silicone ring guards are recommended.

COMPULSORY EQUIPMENT

The compulsory equipment of a player is:

- a shirt with sleeves
- shorts or track suit trousers
- socks
- shinguards – these must be of suitable material to provide reasonable protection and covered by the socks. Guidance for use of shin pads in grassroots football
- footwear –appropriate to local conditions and surface type

COLOURS

- the two teams must wear colours that distinguish them from each other and the referee
- each goalkeeper wears colours which are distinguishable from the other players and the referee



OTHER EQUIPMENT

Non-dangerous protective equipment for example headgear, facemasks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material is permitted as are goalkeepers' caps and sports spectacles.

Accessories are permitted as long as they are not dangerous and are safely and securely covered. Dangerous items must be removed and not taped or covered. The players must be inspected before the start of the match and substitutes before they enter the field of play. If a player is wearing or using unauthorised/ dangerous equipment or accessories, the referee must order the player to:

- Remove the item
- Leave the field of play at the next stoppage

A player who refuses to comply or wears the item again must be cautioned.

Where head covers (excluding goalkeepers' caps) are worn, they must:

- be black or the same main colour as the shirt (provided that the players of the same team wear the same colour)
- be in keeping with the professional appearance of the player's equipment
- not be attached to the shirt
- not be dangerous to the player wearing it or any other player (e.g. opening/closing mechanism around neck)
- not have any part(s) extending out from the surface (protruding elements).

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

For any Offences of this Law:

- the player at fault is instructed by the referee to leave the playing area to correct their equipment or to obtain any missing item of equipment. The player may not return to the playing area without first reporting to the referee, who then checks that the player's equipment is correct. The player is only allowed to re-enter the playing area when the ball is out of play.
- players can return to play whilst the ball is in play if a second official has checked the equipment. If no second official is present the player must wait for play to stop in order for the referee to check the faulty equipment.

LAW 5
THE REFEREE

THE AUTHORITY OF THE REFEREE

Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match.

DECISIONS OF THE REFEREE

Decisions will be made to the best of the referee's ability according to the Laws of the Game and the 'spirit of the game'.

The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final. The decisions of the referee, and all other match officials, must always be respected.

POWERS AND DUTIES

The referee:

- enforces the Laws of the Game
- controls the match in cooperation with the other match official
- acts as timekeeper and keeps a record of the match and provides the appropriate authorities with a match report which includes information on any disciplinary action taken against players, and/or team officials and any other incidents which occur before, during or after the match
- supervises and/or indicates the restart of play

ADVANTAGE

- allows play to continue when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from such an advantage and penalises the original offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- punishes the more serious offence in terms of sanction, restart, physical severity and tactical impact when more than one offence occurs at the same time
- takes disciplinary action against players guilty of cautionable, sin-bin (temporary dismissal) and sending-off offences
- takes action against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and may, at their discretion, issue a caution (blue card) or a sending off (red card) from the playing area and its immediate surrounds
- make use of timed suspensions to exclude temporarily players guilty of offences of the Laws
- in the absence of a second official, the referee should make excluded players aware of the end of their period of suspension

INJURIES

- allows play to continue until there is a stoppage in play if a player is, in their opinion, only slightly injured
- stops the match if a player may be seriously injured and ensures that the player is removed from the playing area
- ensures any player bleeding leaves the playing area
- allows a team's penalty taker, if injured, to stay on the field of play to be treated (quickly) and then take the kick

OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE

- stops, suspends or terminates the match for any offence of the Laws or due to any kind of outside interference
- allows no unauthorised persons to enter the playing area

LAW 6
THE ADDITIONAL MATCH OFFICIAL

DUTIES

The duties of the additional match official are to assist the referee in controlling the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game in the following areas:

- assist the referee in identifying offences in relation to Law 18, especially offences that occur off the ball
- control of the substitution procedure, ensuring that the player to be replaced has left the playing area before the substitute is allowed to enter the playing area
- check the equipment of all the substitutes entering the playing area
- ensure that a player sent from the playing area by the referee, to replace any missing or defective equipment is checked before being allowed back on to the playing area
- if a player who is bleeding has been removed from the playing area by the referee, the match official must ensure that the bleeding has stopped before the player is allowed to re-enter the playing area
- keep a full record of the match details
- act as the timekeeper for any player who has been given a temporary suspension from the match
- report to the referee any misconduct by any of the team players or officials in the technical / bench / substitute area
- carry out any other duties as requested by the referee

LAW 7
THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

The duration of the match shall be divided into between two and four equal periods of between 5 to 30 minutes each, subject to the following:

- allowance shall be made in each period for time lost through stoppages
- the duration of any period shall be extended to enable a penalty kick to be taken
- the interval between periods shall not exceed five minutes, except with the referee's permission

Competition rules may allow for a match to be played in its entirety without any interval or requirement to change ends.



LAW 8
THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

A kick-off starts each half/period of a match and restarts play after a goal has been scored. Free kicks, penalty kicks, kick/roll-ins, goal clearances and corner kicks are other ways of restarting play (see Laws 13 – 17). A dropped ball is the restart when the referee stops play and the Law does not require one of the above restarts.

If an offence occurs when the ball is not in play this does not change how the play is restarted.

KICK-OFF

Procedure

- the team that wins the toss of a coin decides which goal to attack in the first half or to take the kick off
- depending on the above, their opponents take the kick off or decide which goal to attack in the first half
- for the second half/period (and subsequent periods) the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals: kick-offs continue to alternate between the two teams

For every kick-off:

- all players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play
- the opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be at least 3m from the ball until it is in play
- the ball must be stationary on the centre mark
- the referee gives a signal
- the ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves
- a goal may not be scored directly against the opponents from the kick-off; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponent. If the ball directly enters the opponents goal, a goal kick is awarded to the opponents. In these cases, a goal may only be scored following a deliberate play or touch by a player who has not taken the kick-off.

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

If the player taking the kick-off touches the ball again before it has touched another player an indirect free kick is awarded.

In the event of any other kick-off procedure offence, the kick-off is retaken.

DROPPED BALL

Procedure

If, when play was stopped:

- the ball was inside the penalty area, the referee drops it for the defending team's goalkeeper in their penalty area
- the ball was outside the penalty area, the referee drops it for one player of the team that would have retained or gained possession (including from the restart if the ball would have gone out of play)

If this cannot be determined by the referee it is dropped for one player of the team that last touched it. The ball is dropped at its position when play was stopped, unless it hit a match official or outside agent, in which case it is dropped at the position of the interference/contact. All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play.

The ball is in play when it touches the ground.

Where barricades are in use the referee shall drop the ball 2m from the barricade.

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

The ball is dropped again if it:

- touches a player before it touches the ground
- leaves the playing area after it touches the ground, without touching a player.

If a dropped ball enters the goal without touching at least two players play is restarted with;

- a goal kick if it enters the opponents' goal
- a corner kick if it enters the team's goal.

LAW 9
THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

BALL OUT OF PLAY

The ball is out of play when:

- it has wholly passed over the goal line or touchline on the ground or in the air
- play has been stopped by the referee
- when it rises above the designated height restriction
- it touches a match official, remains on the field of play, and:
  - a team starts a promising attack or
  - the ball goes directly into the goal or
  - the team in possession of the ball changes.

In the three cases above, play is restarted with a dropped ball.

BALL IN PLAY

The ball is in play at all other times when it touches a match official and when it rebounds off a goal post, crossbar, corner flag post or the barricades and remains in the playing area.

HEIGHT OF BALL RESTRICTIONS

A height restriction must apply, which cannot be less than the height of the crossbar and not greater than 2 metres. If the ball rises above the designated height restriction, an indirect free kick is awarded from where the offence took place. This refers to the location where the ball last made contact with the kicker.

If a height offence occurs within the penalty area and is committed by the goalkeeper who has control of the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded 3.5m from the penalty area line nearest to where the offence took place.

Any save or block from a goalkeeper that rises above the designated height restriction will result in a side-line restart (kick- in) for the opposing team, in line with where the offence took place.



LAW 10
DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF A MATCH

GOAL SCORED

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no offence has been committed by the team scoring the goal.

The goalkeeper from the attacking side is not allowed to score. The exception to this is during kicks from the penalty mark. If the goalkeeper does play the ball in to the opponents' goal, play is restarted with a goal clearance.

WINNING TEAM

The team scoring the greater number of goals during a match is the winner. If both teams score an equal number of goals or if no goals are scored, the match is drawn.

When competition rules require a winning team after a drawn match or home-and-away tie, the only permitted procedures to determine the winning team are:

- away goals rule
- two equal periods of extra time
- kicks from the penalty mark

KICKS FROM THE PENALTY MARK PROCEDURE

Kicks from the penalty mark are taken after the match has ended and, unless otherwise stated, the relevant Laws of the game apply.

Procedure

- unless there are other considerations (e.g. ground conditions, safety etc.), the referee tosses a coin to choose the goal at which the kicks will be taken which may only be changed for safety reasons or if the goal or playing surface becomes unusable
- the referee tosses a coin and the team that wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick
- the referee keeps a record of the kicks being taken
- competition rules will determine the number of kicks with the kicks taken as described hereafter
- the kicks are taken alternately
- only players who are on the playing area or are temporarily off the playing area (injured, adjusting equipment, in the sin bin etc.) at the end of the match are eligible to take kicks
- if, before or during the kicks from the penalty mark, one team has a greater number of players than its opponents, it must reduce to the same number as the opponents and the referee must be informed of the name and number of each player excluded.
- if, before both teams have taken their designated number of kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its designated number of kicks, no more kicks are taken
- if, after both teams have taken the designated number of kicks, both have scored the same number of goals, kicks continue to be taken in the same order, until one team has scored one goal more than the other from the same number of kicks
- any eligible player may change places with the goalkeeper
- only the eligible players and match officials are permitted to remain on the playing area when kicks from the penalty mark are taken
- all players, except the player taking the kick and the two goalkeepers, must remain in the opposite half to that where the kicks are being taken
- a goalkeeper who is unable to continue before or during the penalty kicks may be replaced by a player excluded from the game, or a named substitute, to equalise the numbers, the replaced goalkeeper can take no further part and may not take a kick

LAW 11
OFFSIDE

There is no offside in Walking Football.

LAW 12
FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Walking football is a non-contact version of the game. Particular caution should be taken to avoid accidental contact from behind or alongside opponents, where their awareness is reduced.

Fouls and misconduct are penalised with an indirect free kick as follows:

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences against an opponent in a manner considered by the referee to be **careless, reckless or using excessive force**:

- charges
- jumps at
- kicks or attempts to kick
- pushes
- strikes or attempts to strike (including head-butt)
- tackles or challenges
- trips or attempts to trip

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

- does not walk
- heads the ball
- hold an opponent
- bites or spits at someone
- slides in an attempt to play the ball when it is being played or attempted to be played by an opponent (sliding tackle)
- plays the ball whilst on the floor
- deliberately touches the ball with their hand or arm, for example moving the hand or arm towards the ball
- touches the ball with the hand/arm when it has made the body unnaturally bigger
- scores in the opponent's goal directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental or immediately after the ball has touched their hand/arm, even if accidental
- throws or kicks an object at the ball, opponent or match official or makes contact with the ball with a held object
- where barriers are in place, holding onto the barrier to shield the ball; players are permitted to hold the barriers to correct their balance

An indirect free kick is awarded if a goalkeeper commits one of the following offences:

- touches or controls the ball with their hands/arm or feet, in the penalty area, for more than six seconds
- allows the ball to remain in controlled possession or stop in a stationary position in the penalty area without touching it for more than six seconds
- If a goalkeeper has control/possession of the ball and in the process of distributing it back into play causes it to exceed the height restriction, then a free kick should be awarded to the opposition, 3.5m from the penalty area line nearest to where the offence took place.
- receives the ball back directly from a team mate to whom they have just passed the ball without the ball having made contact with any other player.

An indirect free kick is also awarded if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:

- plays in a dangerous manner. This refers to any actions that could threaten the safety of a player (including themself) even where no physical contact occurs
- impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made
- is guilty of dissent, offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures or other verbal offences
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball
- commits any other offence, not mentioned in the Laws, for which play is stopped to temporarily suspend or send off a player

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The use of temporary time suspensions (sin bins) and the exclusion of a player arising from the issuing of a red card are the recommended disciplinary sanctions for use in walking football. Match officials should employ the use of temporary timed suspensions (blue cards) in all cases traditionally regarded as cautionable offences.

The options for a match official imposing disciplinary sanctions are therefore:

- player issued with a blue card and temporarily suspended from play
- player issued with a red card and permanently excluded from play

A blue card offence should always be accompanied by a temporary suspension from play.

The period of timed suspension in walking football shall be between three and five minutes. The release of players from a temporary suspension should be at the direction of the referee or additional match official.

TEMPORARY TIMED SUSPENSIONS – PROCEDURES

A player temporarily suspended from play will be shown a blue card by the match official and informed that they are suspended from play for between three and five minutes.

The length of the temporary suspension must be set by the competition depending on match length.

If match length is:

- Below 20 mins = 3 min suspension
- Between 20-29 mins = 4 min suspension
- 30+ mins = 5 min suspension

The player is obliged to leave the playing area and remain in a designated 'sin bin' area for the required suspension time. Separate 'sin bin' areas should be identified for each team. If no designated 'sin bin' areas are provided then suspended players should remain in the area where they can be seen by the referee and adjacent to team officials and substitutes.

A player will be informed as to the end of a period of suspension by the referee or match official and invited to re-join the match. Where barricades are used the players must return through the opening onto the playing area.

If a temporary dismissal period has not been completed at the end of the first half, the remaining period is served from the start of the second half; this also applies in extra time. A player who is still serving a temporary dismissal at the end of the match is permitted to take part in a penalty shoot-out.

TEMPORARY DISMISSALS

A player is shown the blue card and temporarily excluded from play if they commit any of the following offences:

- C1 – unsporting behaviour
- C2 – shows dissent by word or action
- C3 – committing three individual offences of not walking and/or physical contact
- C4 – delays the restart of play by:
  - Appearing to take a throw in (kick in for walking football), but suddenly leave it to a team mate to take
  - Delaying leaving the Field of Play when being substituted
  - Excessively delaying the restart of play
  - Kicking or carrying the ball away or deliberately touching the ball when the referee has stopped play
  - Taking a kick-in or roll-in from the wrong position to force a retake
- C5 – fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, kick-in, free kick or goal clearance
- C6 – enters or re-enters the playing area without the referee's permission or commits a substitution procedure offence
- C7 – deliberately leaves the playing area without the referee's permission outside of a substitution
- C8 – denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)
- C9 – denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick and that particular offence is not deemed to be reckless or using excessive force

C8 and C9 are also sanctioned with the award of a penalty kick to the opposition

Exception to the use of 'blue cards' and temporary dismissals

The only exception to the use of 'Blue Cards' and Temporary Timed Suspensions is in facilities where if a player is excluded for between three and five minutes, they are unable to take up a position which is still in the eye line of the referee but outside the boundaries of the playing area. This might be the case in an enclosed sports hall or in a complex of caged playing areas. In such circumstances safety considerations requires the referee to employ the use of yellow cards, with all players remaining on the playing area unless excluded permanently. In this situation normal disciplinary sanctions will apply after the match as per the competition rules. If 2 yellow cards are given to an individual the player will be shown a red card and dismissed.

SENDING-OFF OFFENCES

A player is sent off and shown the red card if he/she commits any of the following offences:

- S1 – serious foul play
- S2 – violent conduct
- S3 – spits at or bites someone
- S4 – uses offensive, insulting or abusive language
- S5 – receives a second blue/yellow card in the same match

If play is stopped for a player to be sent from the playing area without having committed any additional offence of the Laws, the match is restarted by an indirect free kick, awarded to the opposing team, to be taken at the place where the offence occurred. However, if the offence is committed in the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken 3.5m from the penalty area line at the place nearest to where the offence occurred.

Decisions

A player who has been sent off may not take any further part in the match nor may they sit on the substitutes' bench, where provided.



LAW 13
FREE KICKS

TYPES OF FREE KICKS

Indirect free kicks are awarded to the opposing team of a player, substitute, substituted or sent off player, or team official guilty of an offence.

BALL ENTERS THE GOAL

- if an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal kick is awarded
- if an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the team's goal, a corner kick is awarded

In these cases, a goal may only be scored following a deliberate play or touch by a player who has not taken the free kick.

A goal cannot be scored where a player attempts to circumvent the laws of the game by deliberately attempting to play the ball against an opponent or opposing player in order to score a goal at the taking of an indirect free kick. This is regarded as 'unsporting behaviour (see Law 12) and will be sanctioned with a blue card and a temporary timed dismissal

Procedure

All free kicks are taken from the place where the offence occurred, except:

- free kicks to the attacking team are taken 3.5m (a penalty mark is made 7m from the midpoint between the goal posts) from the penalty area line at the point nearest to where the offence occurred

THE BALL:

- must be stationary and the kicker must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player
- Is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves

Until the ball is in play all opponents must remain:

- at least 3m from the ball

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

If, when a free kick is taken, an opponent is closer to the ball than the required distance the kick is retaken unless the advantage can be applied. If, after the ball is in play, the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposition.

LAW 14
THE PENALTY KICK

THE PENALTY KICK

A penalty kick is awarded for the following offences:

- a defending player deliberately enters their own penalty area
- a goalkeeper committing any of the seven sending off offences within their penalty area
- a goalkeeper deliberately exits their own penalty area
- denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)
- denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
- the opposition accumulating a sixth not walking and/or physical contact offence

The following must be considered when determining whether the offence is denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity:

- the distance between the offence and the goal
- the general direction of the play
- the likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball
- the location and number of defending outfield players, as well as the goalkeeper

A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each period or at the end of each period of extra time.

Procedure

The ball must be stationary on the penalty mark and the goalposts, crossbar and goal net must not be moving.

The player taking the penalty kick must be clearly identified.

The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, without touching the goalposts, crossbar or goal net until the ball has been kicked.

When the kick is taken the goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on (or, if it in the air, in line with) the goal line.

The players other than the kicker and the goalkeeper must be:

- at least 3m from the ball
- behind or to the side of the penalty mark
- inside the playing area
- outside the penalty area

The player taking the penalty kick:

- must kick the ball forward
- must not play the ball again until it has touched another player
- must start their approach with both feet on the ground no more than two metres from the ball
- must not feint to kick the ball after having completed the approach

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

The penalty kick is completed when the ball stops moving, goes out of play or the referee stops play for any offence.

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

Once the referee has signalled for the penalty kick to be taken, the kick must be taken. If, before the ball is in play, one of the following occurs.

A player of the defending team commits an offence:

- the kick is retaken, if a goal is not scored
- the kick is not retaken if a goal is scored

A team-mate of the player taking the kick commits an offence:

- the kick is retaken if a goal is scored
- the kick is not retaken if a goal is not scored

The player taking the kick commits an offence after the ball is in play an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Feinting to kick the ball once the kicker has completed the approach (feinting in the approach is permitted) will result in the referee cautioning (blue card) the kicker.

Outcome of the Penalty Kick		
	Goal	No Goal
Encroachment by attacking player	Penalty is retaken	Indirect free kick
Encroachment by defending player	Goal	Penalty is retaken
Offence by goalkeeper	Goal	Penalty is retaken and caution for goalkeeper
Ball kicked backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
Illegal feinting	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker
Illegal approach to the ball	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick

LAW 15
THE KICK-IN

TYPES OF FREE KICKS

A kick-in is a method of restarting play.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in.

A kick-in is awarded:

- when the whole of the ball passes over a touch line, either on the ground or in the air OR when the ball rises above the designated height restriction after a save or block from the goalkeeper
- from the place where it crossed the touch line
- to the opponents of the player who last
- touched the ball
- where the playing area is surrounded by barricades, there are no kick ins. When the ball leaves the field of play, play is restarted with a goal clearance, by the goalkeeper whose half of the field the ball was in when leaving the field of play

POSITION OF THE BALL AND THE PLAYERS

The ball:

- must be stationary on or behind the touch line
- must start no further than 1m behind the touch line
- may be kicked in any direction

The player taking the kick-in:

- must have part of each foot on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line at the moment of kicking

The players of the defending team must be at least 3m from the place where the kick-in is taken.

Procedure

- the player taking the kick-in must not play the ball again until it has touched another player
- the ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

The kick-in is retaken by a player of the opposing team if:

- the kick-in is taken incorrectly
- the kick-in is taken from a position other than the place where the ball passed over the touch line or where indicated by the referee where barricades are in use

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposition if the player taking the kick in plays the ball again before it has touched another player.

LAW 16
THE GOAL CLEARANCE

THE GOAL CLEARANCE

A goal clearance is a method of restarting play.

A goal may not be scored directly from a goal clearance.

The goal clearance is awarded when:

- the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 10
- a player enters the opposing penalty area

Procedure

- the opponents must remain outside the penalty area
- the goalkeeper must not play the ball again until it has touched another player
- the ball is in play when the ball is kicked from any stationary point within the penalty area by the goalkeeper of the defending team

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

If the ball is not kicked directly beyond the penalty area the goal clearance is retaken.

If, after releasing the ball, the goalkeeper touches the ball again, before it has touched another player an indirect free kick is awarded 3.5m from the penalty area line from the place nearest to where the offence occurred.

If the goalkeeper receives the ball from a teammate in open play the goalkeeper is permitted to touch the ball and to pick the ball up.

If, after releasing the ball, the goalkeeper touches the ball again before it has either touched an opponent or has been touched by at least two players of the goalkeeper's team, an indirect free kick is awarded 3.5m from the penalty area line from the place nearest to where the offence occurred.

LAW 17
THE CORNER KICK

THE CORNER KICK

A corner kick is a method of restarting play.

A goal may not be scored directly against the opponents from a corner; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponent. If the ball directly enters the opponents' goal, a goal clearance is awarded to the opponents. In these cases, a goal may only be scored following a deliberate play or touch by a player who has not taken the corner.

A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 10.

Procedure

- the ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner
- opponents must remain at least 3m from the ball until it is in play
- the ball is kicked by a player of the attacking team
- the ball is in play when it is kicked or touched
- the kicker must not touch the ball again until it has been played by or touched another player

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

An indirect free kick is awarded if the player taking the corner kick touches the ball again before it has been played by or touched another player.

For any other offence the corner kick is retaken.

Where the playing area is surrounded by barricades, there are no corner kicks. When the ball leaves the field of play, play is restarted with a goal clearance, by the goalkeeper whose half of the field the ball was in when leaving the field of play.

LAW 18
WALKING AND PHYSICAL CONTACT

WALKING

Walking is defined as 'always having at least one foot in contact with the ground and relates to the motion of all players moving around the field of play. A goalkeeper is exempt from this rule whilst in the action of making a save, for example diving or jumping with both feet off the ground.

OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS

The referee will award an indirect free kick against any player who is not walking, unless there is a clear attacking opportunity for the team in possession. Where advantage can be played, the offending teams should be sanctioned once play has stopped, or the advantage has not accrued.

A blue card is given to a player who commits three individual offences of not walking and/or physical contact. This count will maintain for the entirety of the game and only reset after a temporary timed suspension has been completed due to a third offence.

If, following a temporary timed suspension, the same player commits a further three individual offences of not walking and/or physical contact a second blue card followed by a red card will be shown.

A penalty kick is awarded to the opposition on the sixth accumulated not walking and physical contact offence committed by a team. This team count is then reset to zero and the not walking and physical contact offences will accumulate again.

The team count will reset at the interval periods except where the match duration is less than 20 minutes.

The following will not be included within the team count:

- Any offence committed as per Law 14
- The awarding of a penalty and a blue card for denying an obvious goalscoring opportunity
- A third individual not walking and/or physical contact offence punishable by a blue card

APPENDIX A

NOTES ON THE LAWS FOR WALKING FOOTBALL – MODIFICATIONS

Provided the principles of these laws are maintained, the Laws may be modified in their application for matches, including for players with disabilities as outlined below.

Any or all of the following modifications are permissible:

- Number of designated penalties to be taken when deciding the outcome of a match.
- Appointment of an additional match official.
- The process for deciding the outcome of a match, that ends in a draw.
- Size of the playing area.
- Size, weight and material of ball.
- Width between the goalposts and height of the crossbar from the ground.
- Prior to the start of a competition, the organiser can determine the designated height restriction as per Law 9, which cannot be less than the height of the crossbar and no greater than 2m.
- The durations of the periods of play.
- Substitutions.
- Number of substitutes.
- The durations of the timed suspension. See Law 12 for detail.
- A restriction on the number of touches per player.



APPENDIX B

NOTES ON THE LAWS FOR WALKING FOOTBALL – GUIDANCE

PITCH MARKINGS

- Where possible, it is advised to use existing pitch markings at facilities used.
- It is possible to use existing pitch markings outside of 6m to mark the penalty area.

SHIN GUARDS

- Players may be exempt from wearing shinguards if they hold a current appropriate doctors note explaining why they cannot do so. This must be shown to the referee and agreed before the commencement of the game. Refer to the England Football 'Guidance for use of shin pads in grassroots football' for more information.

GOALS DIRECT FROM KICK OFF/CORNER

- Where the law states "a goal may only be scored following a deliberate play or touch by a player who has not taken the kick-off/corner", this includes a deliberate save from a goalkeeper.

PLAYING IN A DANGEROUS MANNER

Examples of playing in a dangerous manner could include:

- Raised feet.
- Intentionally striking at the ball with a powerful or uncontrolled motion.
- Blocking with no attempt to play the ball.
- A tackle or challenge made from directly behind an opponent, or from a position outside the opponents forward-facing field of play.

PASS BACKS

- Passes between an outfield player and goalkeeper are permitted as per Law 12.

PENALTY KICK PROCEDURE

- Backwards or lateral movement is acceptable if within 2m zone from the penalty mark and does not occur once the player's approach to the ball has been completed.

PENALTY AREA INFRINGEMENTS

- As soon as the ball is in contact with the penalty area line, no player except the goalkeeper can play the ball. A ball that is stationary on the penalty line can be retrieved by the goalkeeper without committing any offence.

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