



HAND BALL

Everyone knows you can't use your hands in soccer. However it does not end there. A handball includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder.

The proper way to look at this soccer rule is that a player cannot "handle" the ball. A ball that is kicked and hits a player's hand or arm is NOT a handball. This means that the referee must use his or her own judgement to some extent in determining whether or not a handball is simply accidental contact.

We all know the goalkeeper can pick up the ball. However there is a situation where even they cannot handle the ball. This is the back-pass rule. Goalkeepers cannot pick up a pass that came directly from one of their teammates. In this case, the goalkeeper must use his or her feet. An infraction of this soccer rule will result in an indirect kick from the point of the infraction.



THROW-INS

A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses the sideline. The basic rules for a proper throw-in are to have both feet on the ground and to throw the ball with both hands over the head.



CORNER KICKS & GOAL KICKS

A corner kick or goal kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across the end-line (the end of the field).

When the offensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a goal kick. If the defensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a corner kick.

The goal kick is taken from anywhere inside the 6 yard box. This is the small box in front of the goal. Any player, not just the goalkeeper, can take it.

A corner kick is taken from the corner nearest to where the ball left the field.

FOULS

A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent.

But, it is not that easy. Soccer can be a physical, contact sport when two opposing players both want the soccer ball. Unavoidable collisions can and do occur.

"Foul! Hey, Referee. Are you blind?"

What you need to know is that bumping or going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for a ball is not a foul until the hands or elbows come up. This is a bit of a judgement call and not all referees will call it the same way. You may not agree with the call. However, "the referee is always right".

DIRECT & INDIRECT FREE KICKS

On a direct kick you can score by kicking the ball directly into the goal. On an indirect kick you cannot score until the ball is touched by another player. There are many rules around what causes a direct or indirect kick.

Generally, direct kicks come from a contact foul or handball. Everything else is indirect.



OFF SIDE

(not enforced until Under 12)

This is without a doubt the least understood rule in soccer.

The first thing you should know is you cannot be offside on a corner kick, goal kick, or throw in.

Secondly, it is not an infraction for a player to be in an offside position. The player must be involved in active play as determined by the referee to be called offside.

STILL NOT SURE?

An offensive (attacking) player cannot be ahead of the ball and involved in the play unless there is a defender between him or her and the goalkeeper. In other words, you can't hang out at the other team's goal just waiting for the ball.

AND!

You can't be offside if you are standing on your half of the field.

The offside rule applies when the ball is kicked, NOT when the player receives the ball.

The offside rule is difficult to understand. What appeared to be offside one minute is not the next. Screaming at the referee "Offside! Offside! Come on Ref, that was offside!" will not change the call.

To learn more about the fastest growing sport in Canada visit www.soccer.on.ca

Dear Parents:

In relative terms soccer is a new sport to Canada. While hockey and baseball were once the most popular sports in Canada, today soccer is rapidly rising to the top.

One of the problems this has caused is that many parents are learning the rules of the game along with their children. The rules are far more complicated in soccer than in any other sport.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to attempt to give parents some insight into what we see as the most contentious rules.

Understanding the rules will help you to help us help your child achieve the greatest amount of fun and enjoyment out of their soccer experience.

We also want to show support for our referees. Referee abuse will no longer be tolerated. Our referees are highly trained. They are dedicated to the sport and to your children's enjoyment of the sport.

The few rules covered in this pamphlet are only a start. We encourage you to take the time to ask your child's coach about the rules. Read a book or visit some websites. There are many fine publications that will help you understand the beautiful game of soccer.

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Parents' Guide To The Rules of Soccer

