

NORTHWEST RECREATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE (NRSL)

Revised 03/11/2025

LEAGUE MISSION AND GOALS STATEMENT

The Northwest Recreational Soccer League (NRSL) was created to provide an opportunity for boys and girls in the member communities to participate in a safe, fair, and fun recreational soccer program. In addition, the league will strive to provide support to our coaches, referees and league families which will enable them to better understand and enjoy the game of soccer, resulting in a more positive experience for everyone involved. It is our intention that each participant will learn the rules of the game, improve their technical and tactical knowledge and skills, learn the value of teamwork, and learn the value of good sportsmanship. We hope to provide an experience that fosters continued participation in all recreational sports that will last all the way through adulthood. It is expected that all organizations in NRSL send all their U10, U12, and U14 teams to the NRSL. If this does not happen, possible probation or expulsion from the NRSL can occur based on a vote from league members called together at the semi-annual NRSL Spring or NRSL Fall meetings. A simple majority vote is needed if a vote were to occur for this infraction.

LAWS OF THE GAME - FIFA/USSF laws of the game apply except as modified below.

1. Field of Play

U8 Division

Field Size: 47 yards X 30 yards

Goal Size: 6' high X 12' wide

Goal Area: 3 yards from each post and 3 yards out from goal line

Penalty Area: 10 yards from each post and 10 yards out from goal line

Penalty Spot: 7 yards out from center of goal

Penalty Arc: Radius of 5 yards from Penalty Spot

Center Circle: Radius of 5 yards Build Out Line: 14 yards from each goal line

U10 Division

Field Size: 60 yards X 40 yards

Goal Size: 6.5' high and 18.5' wide (U10)

Goal Area: 3 yards from each post and 3 yards out from goal line

Penalty Area: 10 yards from each post and 10 yards out from goal line

Penalty Spot: 7 yards out from center of goal

Penalty Arc: Radius of 5 yards from Penalty Spot

Center Circle: Radius of 5 yards Build Out Line: 14 yards from each goal line

Build Out Line: ½ way between the top of the penalty area and the midfield line.

Note: The build out line is used to promote playing the ball out of the back in an unpressured setting.

- When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line.

- Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball to a teammate. Punting or drop-kicking the ball by the goalkeeper is not allowed at the U8 or U10 levels as this would defeat the purpose of the build out line and reduces the opportunity to play out of the back in an unpressured setting.
- If the goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball, the referee will immediately stop play and return the ball back to the goalkeeper for proper distribution. Repeated violations by the same team may be considered persistent infringement and result in a caution being issued to the offending goalkeeper.
- The goalkeeper has **6 seconds** to put the ball into play. This time **does not start** until the opposing team has moved beyond the build-out line.
- Continual delay in putting the ball into play in a timely manner will result in a **Caution** to the goalkeeper and an **indirect-kick** from where the goalkeeper was standing with the ball, or the nearest spot out-side of the goal area if the goalkeeper was standing in the goal area.
- If the opposing team encroaches the build-out line before the goalkeeper releases the ball, the offending team's coach will be **Warned** by the referee. Continuous infringement of the opposing team encroaching the build-out line, will result in the referee issuing a **Caution** to the offending team's coach.
- After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can then cross the build out line and play can resume as normal.

U12 Division

Field Size: 75 yards X 47 yards

Goal Size: 6.5' high X 18.5' wide

Goal Area: 4 yards from each post and 4 yards out from goal line

Penalty Area: 12 yards from each post and 12 yards out from goal line

Penalty Spot: 8 yards out from center of goal

Penalty Arc: Radius of 7 yards from Penalty Spot

Center Circle: Radius of 7 yards

U14 Division

Field Size: 112 yards X 75 yards

Goal Size: 8' high X 24' wide

Goal Area: 6 yards from each post and 6 yards out from goal line

Penalty Area: 18 yards from each post and 18 yards out from goal line

Penalty Spot: 12 yards out from center of goal

Penalty Arc: Radius of 10 yards from Penalty Spot

Center Circle: Radius of 10 yards

Technical Area:

Purpose: The technical area serves as a designated space for team officials and substitutes to observe the game, receive instructions, and prepare for potential substitutions.

Location: It's typically located on the sidelines, near the team benches, and may be marked by lines or cones.

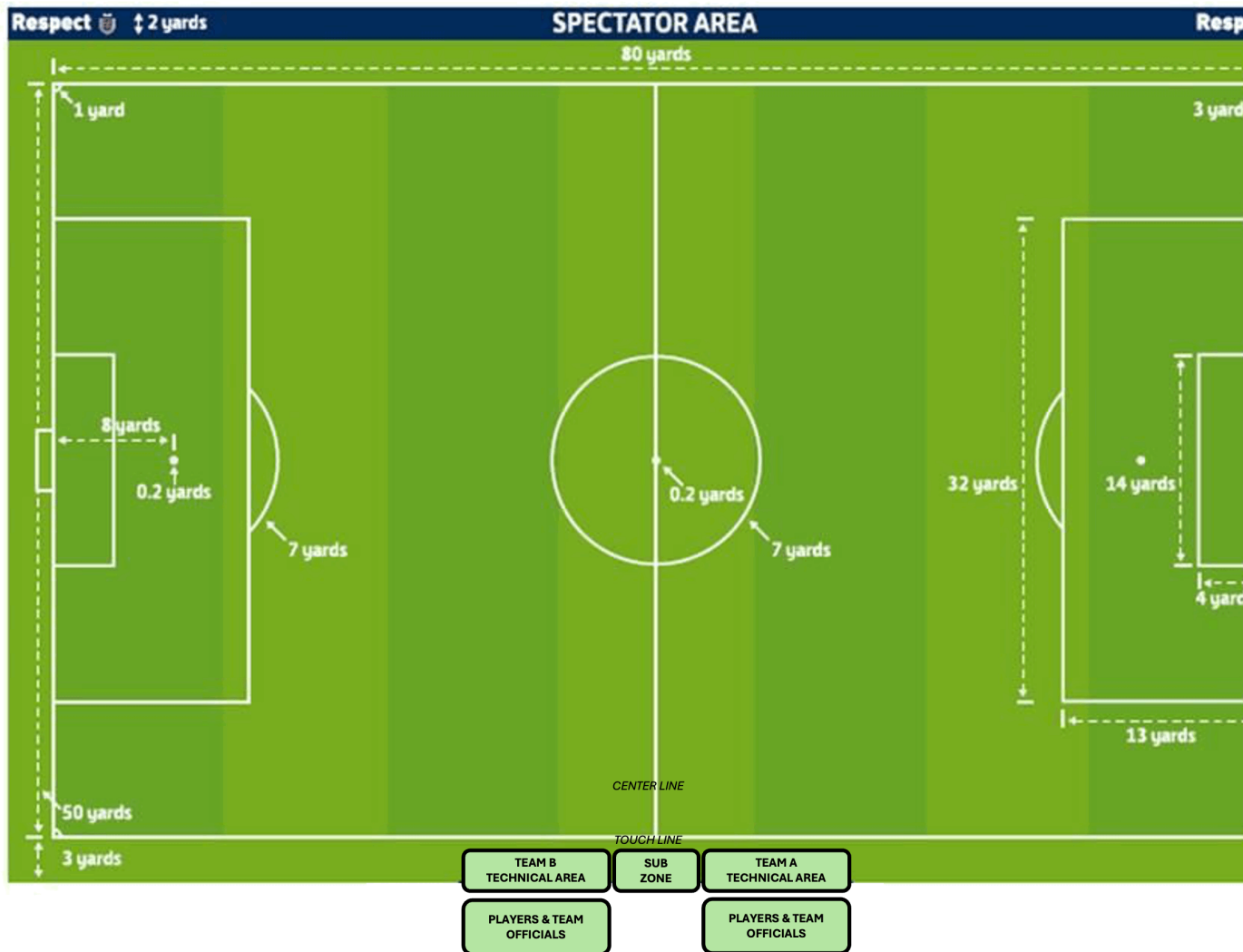
Occupants: Only registered players, coaches, and team officials named on the match sheet are permitted in the technical area.

Rules:

- Only one team official, (coach), is allowed to stand and coach at any one time. Any other coaches & team officials must stand behind the Technical Area in the Players & Team Officials area
- The Coach must remain within the technical area except in specific circumstances, like a physiotherapist entering the pitch with referee permission. Any Coach that leaves the Technical Area is subject to a Caution from the Referee.
- Occupants must behave responsibly, avoiding any obstruction of the players' and referees' movements.

Dimensions: While the size and position of technical areas may vary, they generally extend **8m** from the edge of the Substitution Zone and a minimum of **1m** from the Touch Line.

Substitution Zone: The substitution zone is the area on the touchline in front of the team benches, and between the Technical Area, where substitutes wait until summoned onto the field by the Referee.



2. The Ball

The ball should be spherical and made of leather or other suitable material

Under 8 Division – Size 3 Ball

Under 10 and Under 12 Divisions – Size 4 Ball

Under 14 Division – Size 5 Ball

The HOME team is required to provide 3 balls to the Referee before kick-off. They must be appropriate in size for their respective divisions. One ball will be used for the initial kick-off and the other two are placed behind each goal. This is done to help in preventing delays caused by a ball going into an area that is not easily assessable, (bleachers, fence, forest, etc.).

Replacement of a Defective Ball if the ball bursts or becomes defective during a match: the match is stopped; the match is restarted by dropping the replacement ball at the place where the first ball became defective.

If the ball bursts or becomes defective whilst not in play at a kick-off, goal kick, corner kick, free kick, penalty kick or throw-in, the match is restarted accordingly.

3. The Number of Players

Number of players on the field (including GK)

Minimum # of players required to play

Maximum roster size

U8 & U10: 7v7 (5/14)

U12: 9v9 (7/18)

U14: 11v11 (8/18)

HS/19U: 11v11 (8/25)

*** If a team has less than the regular number of players both teams will play with the same number of players on the field. (Ex: In an Under 10 game, one team has only 6 players available to play, then the other team will play with 6 players as well.)**

Courtesy Rule:

Under 12 and Under 14 – Player Removal: When one team is ahead by 5 or more goals, that team must remove one player from the field until such time the score differential returns to 4 or less.

There must always be a player on the field who is designated as the goalkeeper and wearing colors which distinguish that player from the players of both teams. However, that player may position themselves in any area of the field.

Substitutes:

Any number of players may be substituted at any single substitution opportunity, *during a stoppage in play*, after being summoned onto the field by the referee.

Coaches shall not indiscriminately send players onto the field without alerting an official.

Substitutes should report to the Substitution Zone, (between the Technical areas), to be considered as a substitute. The Referee will summon the waiting substitutes onto the at the appropriate substitution opportunity listed below. An official may choose not to allow a substitution in certain circumstances.

Either team may substitute:

- a) Between halves
- b) After a goal has been scored (substitutes do not need to be waiting at midfield)
- c) Any goal kicks
- d) Because of a Player Injury (substitutes do not need to be waiting at midfield)

The team with possession may substitute

- a) On throw-ins
- b) On corner kicks

Note: If the team in possession is substituting on their own throw-in or corner kick, any player waiting to substitute from the opposing team may also be allowed in at that time.

The goalkeeper may be substituted for after officials have been notified. No player may be substituted during a penalty kick except in case of injury, but the substitute may not take the penalty kick.

No substitutions are allowed for a player committing a red card violation (ejection).

4. The Players' Equipment

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player. No necklaces, watches, bracelets (including the rubber style bracelets), earrings, etc. shall be worn. Exception: Medical bracelets and pendants are allowed but must be taped to the body in such a manner that the medical information is still readable. All hair control devices must be soft to the touch. No knotted devices will be allowed. All casts, splints, and braces shall be covered by soft material and must be approved by referee prior to the start of the game. Safety or sport goggles must be worn in place of regular eyeglasses. For the purposes of this rule, safety lenses in a regular eyeglass frame are not legal for play.

The basic compulsory equipment of a player is:

- Jersey or shirt - All jerseys shall be worn on the outside of all other clothing and shall be tucked inside the shorts. All hoods should be tucked inside the shirt. Goalkeeper jerseys should be a different color from all other jerseys on the field.
- Shorts – In cold weather it is permissible for sweatpants to be worn over the shorts.
- Stockings
- Shin guards – are covered completely by the stockings, are made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, or similar substances), and provide a reasonable degree of protection. Any player found to not be wearing shin guards, will not be allowed to play.
- Footwear - Shoes shall not have square or baseball type cleats. Shoes may not have a toe cleat. Removable cleats are allowed if they are free of burrs and sharp edges.

For any infringement of this Law:

- play need not be stopped
- the player at fault is instructed by The Referee to leave the field of play to correct his equipment
- the player leaves the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play, unless he has already corrected his equipment
- any player required to leave the field of play to correct his equipment does not re-enter without the Referee's permission
- The Referee checks that the player's equipment is correct before allowing him to re-enter the field of play
- the player is only allowed to re-enter the field of play when the ball is out of play.

A player who has been required to leave the field of play because of an infringement of this Law and who enters (or re-enters) the field of play without The Referee's permission is cautioned and shown the yellow card.

5. 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 to which he has been appointed. Games in the U8-U12 Divisions shall be officiated by one referee. Games in the U14 division shall be officiated by one referee and two assistant referees.

The Referee:

- enforces the Laws of the Game
- controls the match in co-operation with The Assistant Referees, where applicable
- ensures that any ball(s) used meet the requirements of Law 2
- ensures that The Players' Equipment meets the requirements of Law 4
- acts as timekeeper and keeps a record of the match
- stops, suspends, or terminates the match, at his discretion, for any infringements of the Laws
- stops, suspends, or terminates the match because of outside interference of any kind
- stops the match if, in his opinion, a player is seriously injured and ensures that he is removed from the field of play. An injured player may only return to the field of play after the match has restarted
- allows play to continue until there is a stoppage in play if a player is, in the opinion of the referee, only slightly injured
- ensures that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from The Referee, who must be satisfied that the bleeding has stopped and there is no blood on the player's uniform
- allows play to continue when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from such an advantage and penalizes the original offence if the anticipated advantage does not materialize at that time
- punishes the more serious offence when a player commits more than one offence at the same time
- takes disciplinary action against players guilty of caution and sending-off offences. He is not obliged to take this action immediately but must do so when the ball next goes out of play
- acts against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and may, at his discretion, expel them from the field of play and its immediate surrounds
- acts on the advice of assistant referees regarding incidents that he has not seen
- ensures that no unauthorized persons enter the field of play
- restarts the match after it has been stopped
- 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 that occurred before, during or after the match.

The decisions of The Referee regarding facts connected with play are final. The Referee may only change a decision on realizing that it is incorrect or, at his discretion, on the advice of an assistant referee, if he has not restarted play.

6. The Assistant Referee

In the U14 Division, two assistant referees should be appointed whose duties, subject to the decision of The Referee, are to indicate:

- when the whole of the ball has passed out of the field of play
- which side is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or throw-in
- when a player may be penalized for being in an offside position
- when a substitution is requested
- when misconduct or any other incident has occurred out of the view of the Referee

- when offences have been committed whenever the assistants are closer to the action than The Referee (this includes, in circumstances, offences committed in the penalty area)
- whether, at penalty kicks, the goalkeeper has moved forward before the ball has been kicked and if the ball has crossed the line.

The Assistant Referees also assist The Referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game. They may enter the field of play to help control the 10-yard distance.

In the U8-U12 Divisions, and in U14 games where one or both assistant referees are not present, volunteers (one from each team, or just from the home team if only one volunteer is needed) should be selected for the sole responsibility to help judge when the ball has gone out of play. Volunteer assistant referees should not perform any of the other regular duties of the Assistant Referee unless indicated to do so by the Referee.

In the event of undue interference or improper conduct, The Referee will relieve an assistant referee of his duties and include any incidents on the match report

7. Duration of the Match

Under 8

4 - 10-minute periods
 2 minutes between quarters.
 5-minute halftime

Under 10

2 – 25-minute halves
 5-minute halftime

Under 12

2 – 30-minute halves
 5-minute halftime

Under 14

2 – 35-minute halves
 5-minute halftime

High School (19U)

2 – 40 minutes halves
 5-minute halftime

Allowance is made in any period for all time lost through:

- Substitution(s)
- Assessment of injury to players
- Removal of injured players from the field of play for treatment
- Wasting time
- Any other cause

The allowance for time lost is at the discretion of the referee.

If time expires before an awarded penalty kick must be taken or retaken, the duration of any period is extended until the penalty kick is completed.

There is no overtime play. Games that are tied at the end of regulation play will be recorded as such.

8. The Start and Restart of Play

BEFORE THE GAME: Both teams line up at the midfield for the official(s) and are inspected for proper uniform and equipment (shin guards and legal shoes). Any questions players or coaches may have should be directed to the official(s) at this time. Any questions during the game should be directed to the referee by the captain(s) only. Introduction of captains is followed by a coin toss. The visiting captain calls the coin toss, and the winner of the toss shall choose which goal to attack. The losing team will receive the initial kick-off. Teams will switch ends and alternate kick-off at the start of each period.

KICK-OFF: All players must start in their own half of the field. The defending team must remain outside the center circle until the kick has been properly taken. The ball may move in any direction. The initial kicker may not touch the ball until it has been touched by another player (Penalty: Indirect free kick by opposing team). All other infractions shall result in a re-kick. A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off. Kick-offs occur after a goal has been scored and at the beginning of each period.

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF PLAY: In case of temporary suspension of play due to injury or an unusual situation, if one team is clearly in possession of the ball, the game shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the point where play was suspended. Should it not be clear possession at the time play was stopped, the game shall be restarted by a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead, provided it is not in the penalty area.

DROP BALL: A drop ball occurs when the referee cannot determine which team kicked the ball out, when the ball becomes deflated, or following a temporary suspension of play (see above). The ball is dropped by the referee from waist level to the ground between two opposing players. The ball must touch the ground before it can be played. The spot of the drop ball is where the ball became dead unless it is in the goal area, or it went out of bounds. If it went out of bounds with no clear possession the ball is dropped 5 yards from the boundary line where the ball went out of play. If the ball was inside the goal area the ball is dropped at the nearest point outside the goal area.

9. The Ball in and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed a goal line or a touch line, whether on the ground or in the air.

The ball is still in play:

- If it rebounds from a goal post, crossbar, or corner flag post
- When it touches an official or linesman in the field of play

10. The Method of Scoring

A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line between the goal post and under the crossbar. A ball touching the goal line is not considered to have crossed the goal line. A goal may score directly from:

- Direct free kick
- Penalty kick
- Corner kick
- Drop ball
- Goalkeeper's punt, drop kick or throw
- Kick-off
- Goal kick

A goal cannot be scored directly from:

- Indirect free kick (restart = goal kick)
- Throw-in (restart = goal kick)
- A free kick into a team's own goal (restart = corner kick)

11. Offside (DOES NOT APPLY TO U8 DIVISION)

It is not an offense to be in an offside position. A player is in offside position if s/he is closer to the goal line than both the ball and the second deepest defender. A player is not in offside position if s/he is in his/her own half of the field or level with the ball or second deepest defender. (NOTE: In normal play the goalkeeper is usually the deepest defender, and the deepest non-goalskeeper is usually the player used to judge offside position.)

A player is penalized for being offside when s/he is in an offside position at the time the ball is played by a teammate if s/he is involved in active play by interfering with play, interfering with an opponent, or gaining an advantage by being in that position. (Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to opposing team at the spot of the foul).

A player is not in an offside position if s/he receives a ball directly from a goal kick, corner kick, or a throw-in.

NOTE: A player in an offside position does not have to be penalized if s/he is not considered to influence the play in the judgement of the referee.

12. Fouls and Misconduct

DIRECT FREE KICKS:

Direct free kicks are awarded to the opposing team if any player:

- kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- jumps at an opponent
- charges an opponent
- strikes or attempts to strike an opponent; pushes an opponent.
- tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- holds an opponent

- spits at an opponent
- handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).

A direct free kick is taken from where the offence occurred.

PENALTY KICKS:

A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above ten offences is committed by a player inside his own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play.

INDIRECT FREE KICKS:

Indirect free kicks are awarded to an opponent if a goalkeeper, while within his/her own penalty area:

- takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it from his possession
- touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player
- touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate
- touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate.

Indirect free kicks are also awarded to the opposing team if any player:

- plays in a dangerous manner
- is guilty of an offside violation
- impedes the progress of an opponent
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
- commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player.
- Heads the ball (12U and below)

CAUTIONS (YELLOW CARD OFFENSES):

A player or coach will be cautioned and shown the yellow card, if in the opinion of the referee, s/he

1. is guilty of unsporting behavior
2. shows dissent by word or action
3. persistently infringes the Laws of the Game
4. delays the restart of play
5. fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick
6. enters or re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission
7. deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission

Any player receiving a yellow card **MUST** be substituted until available substitution. If a team does not have a substitute, that player must still leave the field until the next available substitution. The opposing team will not have to remove any players.

SEND OFFS (RED CARD OFFENSES):

A player or coach will be sent off and shown the red card if, in the opinion of the referee, s/he;

1. is guilty of serious foul play
2. is guilty of violent conduct
3. spits at an opponent or any other person

4. denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to the goalkeeper within his or her own penalty area)
5. denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the players goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
6. uses offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures
7. receives a second caution in the same match

A player who is sent off cannot be replaced. A player or coach who is sent off must leave the vicinity of the game and is prohibited from any further contact (direct or indirect) with their team during the remainder of the game. They will also serve a minimum one game suspension, and possibly more based on a league review of the incident. Suspensions, which cannot be completed during the current league season, will carry over into the next league season that individual is a registered participant in.

13. Free Kicks

Free kicks are either direct or indirect. Free kicks are taken at the spot the infringement occurred, unless otherwise noted. For both direct and indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary, and the kicker may not touch the ball a second time until the ball has been touched by another player.

If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal is awarded. If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal kick is awarded. If any free kick is kicked directly into a team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded

The Referee indicates an indirect free kick by raising his arm above his head. He maintains his arm in that position until the kick has been taken and the ball has touched another player or goes out of play.

Positioning for free kicks taken by a team from within their own defensive penalty area:

- All opponents are at least 10 yards from the ball. (PENALTY: Retake the kick, possible caution to the offending player.)
- All opponents remain outside that penalty area until the ball is in play. (PENALTY: Retake the kick.)
- The ball is in play when it is kicked directly beyond the penalty area.
- A free kick awarded in the goal area is taken from any point inside that area.

Positioning for an indirect free kick awarded to the attacking team:

- All opponents are at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play, unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts. (PENALTY: Retake the kick, possible caution to the offending player.)
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
- An indirect free kick awarded inside the goal area is taken from that part of the goal area line that runs parallel to the goal line, at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Positioning for any other free kick outside of either penalty area:

- All opponents are at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play. (PENALTY: Retake the kick, possible caution to the offending player.)
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

14. The Penalty Kick

A penalty kick is a direct free kick which is awarded against a team that commits one of the ten direct free kick offenses, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play. For a penalty kick the ball is placed on the penalty mark.

All players except the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper must be on the field of play but outside the penalty area and the penalty arc, and behind the penalty spot. The opposing goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, between the goal posts until the ball is kicked (lateral movement is allowed). The ball cannot be kicked until the referee blows the whistle. The kicker cannot touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player. No other player may enter penalty area or penalty arc until the ball has been kicked.

15. The Throw In

When the ball goes over a touch line (sideline) a throw in is awarded to the opposing team of the player who last touched the ball. The thrower must face the field of play. The ball must be thrown in directly over the head from behind the head and part of each foot shall remain in contact with the ground and be either on the touch line or behind the touch line outside the field of play (Penalty: Throw in awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the foul). The ball is in play when any part of it breaks the plane of the touch line. If the ball fails to enter the field of play it should be re-thrown by the same team. After the throw in, the ball may be played by either team. The thrower may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player (Penalty: Indirect free kick from the spot of the foul). A goal cannot be scored on a throw in. A player cannot be called for offside on a throw in. All opponents must stand no less than 2 yards away from the point of the throw in.

16. The Goal Kick

A goal kick awarded to the defending team when the ball crosses the end line after last being touched by the attacking team. The ball is put in play by kicking it from the ground anywhere in the goal area. All opposing players must be outside the penalty area. The ball must be kicked from a stationary position. No player may play the ball until it leaves the penalty area (Penalty: redo goal kick). The goalkeeper cannot pick up the ball and play it. The kicker cannot play the ball until it has been touched by another player (Penalty: Indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the foul). A goal can be scored from a goal kick. A player shall not be called for offside upon receiving a ball directly from a goal kick.

17. The Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded to the attacking team after the ball has crossed the goal line having last been touched by the defending team. The ball is kicked from the ground while within the quarter circle nearest where the ball left the field of play. All players of the defending team must at least 10 yards away until the ball has been kicked (Penalty: redo corner kick). The kicker cannot play the ball until it has been touched by another player (Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the defending team from the spot of the foul). A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.