

15 Minutes on the Rules of the Game
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The Basic Stuff:

Coaches are not allowed on the field of play except in the case of player injury. Just like any other sport the field is reserved for the players

The Lines are in play – If you are standing on a line you are on the field. The ball is in play unless it is completely over the line. A player can actually be momentarily “out of bounds” and still kick the ball provided that the ball is still in the field of play

The Whistle – The whistle is used to start and stop play. For obvious calls such as out of bounds when it is clear what happened, the referee has the option not to use the whistle.

Courtesy to the Refs – Adhere to the Zero Tolerance Rules regarding comments to referees. Coaches should distribute a copy of these rules to all parents as they will be enforced! Coaches are not to approach the refs for any reason. If there are problems, these should be reported to the Division Director who will then take them up with the Refs Coordinator. A copy of the Bays Zero Tolerance Policy is included in your package.

Duration of Game – Unlike other sports the official clock in Soccer is not absolute. Time can be added to make up for time lost to injuries or deliberate time wasting. The referee’s clock is only clock and it’s quite possible that your watch and their watch will not totally agree. Because game time is so short, we do allow the referee to stop the clock for an injury, as we don’t want to rush a small child that is hurt and upset. Once you are out of town soccer, the clock never stops, time is added.

Give the Sideline Referee (AR) Room to Move – AR’s are *supposed* to be 1 yard off the touch lines (side lines). Keep yourself and your players at least that far off the touchlines.

Coach and Team should stay together – These are short fields, but in full field soccer the coach and the team are limited to a “technical area”. The point here is avoiding the habit of coaching the length of the touchline. This is not enforced in town ball, but the purpose of the coach is not to call the game play-by-play.

Basic Game Rules:

Kick off – Start of game or after a goal. The first player must touch and move the ball before a second player can touch it.

Goal Keeper – Each team must have a goal keeper and they must be identified by a different color shirt than all the other players. Typically they wear a pinny. The goal keeper may play outside the penalty area, but can only handle the ball in the penalty area. The Keeper cannot handle a kick directly from their own player or from themselves.

Possession – The team that had the last contact with the ball is the team in possession. If the ball goes out of play, the team that had last contact loses possession

Putting the ball back in Play – The three most common ways of putting the ball back in play are:

Throw – Ins: When the ball goes out of play along the touch lines.

- All opponents must not distract the thrower.
- All players from the other team must be at least 2 feet away until the ball is in play.
- The thrower must keep both feet on the ground and remain behind the touch line until the ball is in play.
- Juniors will be given a second chance to make a proper throw before possession is given to the opposing team.

Goal Kicks: A goalie kick is taken when the ball leaves the field of play across the goal line last touched by the attacking team. All opposing players must remain outside the penalty area until the ball leaves the area. No one from either team can touch the ball until it's in play. If an opposing player touches the ball prior to leaving the penalty area, or if the ball fails to leave the penalty area, the kick is retaken. Also, a goal kick (or throw) cannot cross the halfway line without first touching the ground or another player.

Corner-kick: A corner kick is taken when the ball leaves the field of play across the goal line, last touched by a defender. The ball is in play once it is kicked. The player taking the corner kick must not touch the ball until another player has touched the ball. All opposing players must remain 10 yards away from the ball until it's in play.

Substituting Players – Substituting players can be done when the ball is not in play by the team that has possession. All substitutions are made from the halfway line.

- The exception is that substitutions are not allowed for a corner kick
- If the team with possession decides to substitute, the other team may also make substitutions
- When your team is ready for a substitution, ask the ref for permission to substitute the players.

Penalties

There are a number of penalties in soccer that typically result in the ball changing possession. They are attached. Most penalties that occur outside of the Penalty Area result in a Direct Free Kick. In Town Soccer we only use the **Indirect Free Kick**. An IFK means that after the ball is touched and moved by the first player (kicker), it must touch another player before the ball is in play.

Special Town Rules

Penalty Kicks: Typically infractions by a defending player (except the keeper) in their penalty area results in a Penalty Kick by the attacking team. There will be no penalty

kicks in this division. In the event there is a penalty in the zone, the opposing team will be given an indirect free kick from ten yards outside the goal zone.

Drop Balls: In regular soccer, used to restart play after an injury. There will be no drop balls in this division. If after an injury it is not clear which team had possession, the Ref will alternate giving teams an indirect free kick at the point where play stopped.

Hand Balls: To reduce the number of hand balls called, refs will only call a hand ball if a player intentionally touches the ball. Players who are hit by the ball and use their hands in self defense will not be called for a hand ball.

Length of Game: Town games consist of four twelve minute quarters (this is a town rule). There are breaks of two minutes between quarters and five minutes at the half. Players switch sides at the half. The clock continues to run at all times except for injury. The referee is responsible for keeping the official time.

Mercy Rule Guidelines:

When a team is up by 5 goals, the opposing team is allowed to add another player on the field. This has been decided by the board and the referees have been updated to this specific change.

Please understand that if your team has been dominating the game and the score is only 3-0 for example, then begin backing down your most skilled players applying additional restrictions. Restrictions are as follows:

- Move aggressive players to defense/keeper.
- Stop defense from progressing past half field.
- Don't allow more than 2 offense players to cross into the opposing defensive field.
- Must pass the ball x times before scoring a goal.
- Passes and shots on goal with your left (or less dominant) foot.

The above is a suggested guideline to help address restrictions.

Goalkeepers: Players are not permitted to play more than one quarter in the net during a game. Players can play in the net for a full quarter or coaches may break up the time over the length of the game. Although refs will probably not enforce this, goalies should not hold onto the ball for more than 6 seconds. A team will lose possession of the ball if the goalie mishandles the ball twice. In the junior's, refs may simply warn them to drop the ball and use their feet.

Official FIFA laws of the game:

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/federation/81/42/36/lotg_en_55753.pdf

Please take the above site as a guideline to the rules. Some rules simply don't apply to this league and others are modified for age, etc.