

Victory Sports General Soccer Rules

Here are the standard **general rules** for the game of **soccer (association football)**, as outlined by FIFA's **Laws of the Game**. (Also, refer to the Victory Sports modified rules for additional information.)

1. Number of Players

- Refer to modified rules for each league.

2. Duration of the Match

- **K4-4th Grade** will play (6) 6min periods. After each period, there will be 1 minute to start the next period. Halftime will be 5 minutes after the 3rd period.
- **5th-6th Grade and YLS** will play a match that consists of two 20-minute halves.
- There is a **5-minute halftime break** and a 2-minute cooling period in each half.

3. The Ball In and Out of Play

- The ball is **out of play** when:
 - It completely crosses the **goal line or touchline**, on the ground or in the air.
 - The referee **stops play** for any reason.
- The ball is **in play** at all other times.

4. Scoring a Goal

- A goal is scored when the **entire ball** crosses the **goal line** between the **goalposts and under the crossbar**, provided **no infraction** was committed in the build-up.

5. Offside Rule (Youth League Soccer)

- A player is in an **offside position** if:
 - They are **closer to the opponent's goal** than both the ball and the second-last defender **at the moment the ball is played to them**, and
 - They are **involved in active play** (e.g., receiving the ball or interfering with an opponent).
- **Not offside** if receiving the ball from a **goal kick, corner, or throw-in**.

6. Fouls and Misconduct

Common fouls include:

- **NO SLIDE TACKLING**
- **Kicking, tripping, or pushing** an opponent.
- **Handball**: deliberately handling the ball with the hand or arm.
- **Holding or impeding** an opponent.
- **Females are allowed to cover the chest area with their arms/hands.**

7. Free Kicks and Penalties

- **Free kick:** Awarded for fouls; can be direct (shot on goal allowed) or indirect.
- **Penalty kick:** Given when a foul occurs inside the defending team's penalty area.

Direct vs Indirect Free Kicks

Direct Free Kick

A **direct free kick** allows the player to **kick the ball directly into the goal** without it touching another player.

Common Offenses That Result in a Direct Free Kick:

These typically involve **contact fouls** or **serious misconduct**:

- Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent
- Tripping or attempting to trip an opponent
- Jumping at, charging, or striking an opponent
- Pushing or holding an opponent
- Handball (deliberately handling the ball with the hand/arm)
- Spitting at someone

If a foul occurs inside the penalty area by the defending team → it results in a penalty kick (which is a special type of direct free kick from the penalty spot).

Indirect Free Kick:

An **indirect free kick** must **touch another player** before a goal can be scored. If it goes directly into the goal without a second touch, it's **not counted**.

Common Reasons for an Indirect Free Kick:

These usually involve **technical offenses** or **non-contact infringements**:

- Dangerous play (e.g., high kick near another player's head)
- Impeding progress without contact (shielding the ball unfairly)
- Goalkeeper holds the ball for more than **6 seconds**
- Goalkeeper touches the ball with hands after:
 - A teammate deliberately passes it with their feet
 - A throw-in from a teammate
- Offside offenses
- Dissent or unsporting behavior that doesn't involve physical contact

Examples:

Example of a Direct Free Kick Goal:

A player is tripped just outside the penalty area. The referee awards a direct free kick. The player takes the kick and scores **directly** into the net — **goal counts**.

Example of a Missed Indirect Kick:

A player takes an indirect free kick, and the ball goes directly into the goal without anyone else touching it — the **goal does not count**, and a goal kick is awarded to the defending team.

8. Throw-Ins, Goal Kicks, and Corner Kicks

- **Throw-in:** Awarded when the ball crosses the touchline. Taken by the opposing team of the player who last touched the ball.
- **Goal kick:** Awarded to the defending team when the attacking team last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line.
- **Corner kick:** Awarded to the attacking team when the defending team last touches the ball before it crosses their goal line.

9. Substitutions

- **K4-4th Grade** – Make sure to follow the correct rotation system that gives every player equal playing time. At no time, should a player sit back-to-back periods.
- If a player doesn't feel well, gets hurt, or for any other reason needs to come out, choose the next player in the rotation to sub in. That doesn't disqualify the player from playing the following period.
- **5th Grade to YLS** – Free Substitution
- Substitutions can only happen during **stoppages in play**, with the referee's permission.

Bonus Information:

If a Player Passes the Ball to Their Goalkeeper and the Keeper Picks It Up:

This is an offense, but only under certain conditions.

The offense occurs if:

- A **teammate deliberately** kicks the ball with their **foot** to their **goalkeeper**, and
- The **goalkeeper picks it up** with their **hands**.

This is known as the "**back-pass rule**."

What Happens Next:

- The referee awards an **indirect free kick** to the opposing team **from the spot where the goalkeeper touched the ball with their hands**.
- If this happens **inside the goal area (6-yard box)**, the indirect free kick is taken from the **nearest point on the goal area line** that is parallel to the goal line.

Exceptions – When the Goalkeeper *Can* Handle a Pass from a Teammate:

1. **Header:** The teammate uses their head.
2. **Chest:** The ball is played with the chest or any other legal body part (other than the foot).
3. **Deflection:** The ball reaches the keeper unintentionally or as a deflection.

Only a **deliberate foot pass** is penalized.

Example:

- A defender panics and kicks the ball toward their goalkeeper, who picks it up with their hands to stop a striker — this is an **indirect free kick** for the other team.
- If the defender instead heads the ball back and the keeper picks it up, this is **allowed**.

UPWARD SOCCER LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES

The following rules are in addition to or modifications of the general rules for play according to the Upward Soccer handbook.

K4-K5

- Victory Sports worker will officiate each game.
- No goalies. Players cannot hangout inside their defensive goal box.
- No own goals (doesn't include deflections).
- No throw-ins – ball is tossed back into play by a Coach/Official to keep live play.
- Live Ball is only played from the side lines. Out of bounds will still be in play from the baseline for corner kicks and goal kicks.
- Corner kick taken if:
 - o Defense last touches ball before it goes across end line
 - o Defensive player kicks into own goal
- Goal kicks taken from line in front of goal- defense must be at midfield for goal kicks
- General fouls like hand ball, pushing, & tripping result in direct kick for other team
- End of the period: restart with kick in by team w/ last possession.
- Game format will be 4v4

1st-2nd

- One official
- Each team will play with a Goalie. Make sure players rotate positions.
- Throw-ins will be used for out of bounds restart.
- No own goals – a corner kick is awarded if a team kicks it into their own goal. Doesn't include deflections.
- Goal kicks taken from within the goal box - defense must be at midfield for goal kicks
- General fouls like handball, pushing, & tripping result in direct kicks for the other team.
- There are no penalty kicks.
- End of period: restart play with last possession (goal/corner kick OR throw in in by team w/ last possession)
- Game format will be 5v5

3rd – 4th

- Goalies/keepers will be used.
- Own goals will count.
- Players should play both offense & defense during the course of a game.
- Penalty kicks for fouls in the goal box. The player sits for the remainder of the period for 2 major fouls in the same period.
- Goal kicks are taken from within the goal box. Any player can take a goal kick.
- Goalies cannot pick up passes directly/purposely **kicked** back to them.
- End of period: restart play with last possession (goal/corner kick OR throw in in by team w/ last possession)
- Game format will be 7v7

5th – 6th Boys/ 5th – 7th Girls/ 7th – 9th Coed YLS

- Same as 3rd-4th League with the following additions:
- Own goals will count.
- Games will have free substitutions; 20 min halves w/ running clock.
Coaches will monitor playing time for each player. Players must play at least ½ of the game. Must start 4 games during the season.
- Offsides will be in effect.
- Game format:
 - 5th-6th Grade BOYS (8v8)
 - 5th-7th Grade GIRLS (9v9)
 - Youth League (9v9)