

Outdoor Soccer Rules

Updated 11/7/24
Indicates updated rule or Point of Emphasis.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. All participants must meet the eligibility requirements listed in the Intramural Sports Participant Handbook. **Each participant must be a current UVA student or UVA Rec member, and must purchase an Intramural Sports Pass for the semester in which the activity is taking place.** All expired memberships must be updated before the individual may play in any game. Each player must present a valid UVA Student ID or current UVA Rec Membership Card before each contest in order to be eligible to participate. Any games in which an ineligible player signs in will be considered a forfeit.
2. **Teams are responsible for keeping their players and spectators under control.** Misconduct of players, coaches, managers or spectators can result in penalty, ejection or forfeiture of the game. Spectators must also remain within the area designated by the IM Sports staff.
3. Alcoholic beverages, smoking, and pets are prohibited from all intramural contests.
4. IM Sports Officials/Supervisors will have absolute authority during the contest and can make decisions on any matter or question not specifically covered in the rules.
5. Official NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) rules will be observed with the following Intramural Sports modifications.

EQUIPMENT

1. Players must wear **similarly colored team jerseys**. If teams do not have team jerseys, mesh pullovers will be issued. Goalkeepers must wear a different colored shirt than either team.
2. All jewelry must be removed before participating. If jewelry is discovered during a match, the offending team will be given a warning. If jewelry is discovered a second time, the offending player will be removed and may not reenter until the next game, provided that the jewelry has been removed.
3. If an IM Sports participant is bleeding, they will be removed from the contest immediately. If an IM Sports participant has blood on their clothing, they will be removed from the contest upon detection. The blood may or may not be their own blood. Even a participant who has someone else's blood on their clothing will be removed from the contest. The participant is ineligible to re-enter the contest until the contaminated clothing has been removed. Before any participant re-enters the contest, all bleeding must be stopped and any open wound or laceration covered.
4. All players must wear close-toed shoes.
5. Rubber cleated shoes will be allowed. No screw-in cleats, open toe, open heel or hard soled shoes will be allowed. Metal cleats may not be worn.
6. Hats and any other headwear that has a hard bill or creates a knot-like protrusion are not permitted.
7. Soccer balls will be provided by Intramural Sports. Teams may use their own balls upon mutual agreement.
8. Shin guards are highly recommended.

PLAYING AREA

1. The playing area shall be The Park soccer fields.
2. Active players must remain within the playing area.

PLAYERS/SUBSTITUTES

1. Teams will consist of seven (7) players (one of which will be the goalkeeper). A team may play with a minimum of five (5) players. If a player has been disqualified, then they will not be allowed a replacement.
2. In Co-Rec games, eight (8) players will play for each team. **No more than 4 players on the field may self-identify as the same gender (Men, Women, or Another Non-Binary) at the same time.** If a team is playing with less than 8 players, we will follow a +/-1 rule.
3. Substitutions:
 - a. Either team may substitute **during any dead ball**, between periods, when a goal is scored, when a player is injured and/or removed from the field, on a goal kick, or when a player from either team is cautioned or disqualified.
 - b. If a team substitutes for an injured player during a penalty kick situation, then that substitute may not take the penalty kick.
 - c. Teams may not substitute for a player that has been disqualified. The team must play the remainder of the game shorthanded.
 - d. A team that begins a game shorthanded may add additional players during a stoppage of play.
 - e. Substitutes may not enter the field until beckoned by the official.
 - f. The goalkeeper may change places with a player on the field during any dead ball period.
4. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

LENGTH OF GAME & TIMING

1. Each half will be 20 minutes in length with a continuous running clock. Halftime will be 3 minutes.
2. The clock will stop for all injuries.
3. There will be no team timeouts.
4. Teams will change ends at halftime.
5. The team that did not kickoff in the 1st half will kick-off in the 2nd half.
6. *Mercy rule*--if a team is winning by **8 goals** or more during the final ten minutes, or **5 goals** or more during the final two minutes, the game will be over.

7. In the event of a tie score at the end of regulation during the regular season the game will be recorded as a tie

PLAYOFFS & SHOOTOUTS

1. In the event of a tie score at the end of regulation during a playoff game, a 5-minute golden goal overtime period will be played.
2. If the game is still tied after the overtime period, a shootout will decide the game.
3. A coin flip will decide which team has the option of shooting first or last. Each team has a total of five (5) penalty kicks and will alternate each shot. **For Co-Rec games, teams will follow a +/- 1 rule in regards to penalty takers.**
4. Five players from each team will be selected by the team to shoot (goalkeepers may be one of the shooters). Shooters *do not* have to have been on the field at the end of regulation. However, the goalkeepers *will be* the same as the goalkeepers from the end of regulation.
5. The shootout occurs with the offense shooting from the PK line.
6. The offensive player must shoot in a continuous forward motion, but must wait for the Official to start the play on each kick.
7. The goalkeeper must start on the goal line and may not move off the goal line until the ball has been kicked.
8. Once a shot is taken, no rebounds will be allowed.
9. If the score is tied at the end of the shootout, sudden death penalty kicks will be taken (i.e., 1 kick for each team at a time) to determine the winner. All team members are eligible to take the penalty kicks. No team member may attempt a second kick until all members have attempted their first kick.

GAME PLAY

1. **Kickoff**
 - a. When the official sounds the whistle, a kickoff shall initiate play at the start of each period and after goals.
 - b. At the moment of kickoff, all players shall be on their team's half of the field. Players opposing the kicker shall be at least **6** yards from the ball until it is kicked
 - c. The ball shall be kicked while stationary on the ground in the center of the field. A goal may be scored directly from the kickoff. The ball is in play once it has been touched.
 - d. After the kickoff, the ball may be played by any player except the one who kicked off. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been played by someone else
 - e. **Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the foul.**
2. **Ball In and Out of Play**
 - a. The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed a goal line or touchline, whether on the ground or in the air.
 - b. The ball is in play at all other times, including:
 - i. When it rebounds from a goal post, or crossbar.
 - ii. When it touches an official in the field of play.
 - iii. After a free kick or kickoff.
 - iv. When a drop ball touches the ground.

- v. When a player who is outside the boundary lines plays the ball while it is still in the field of play

3. Drop Ball

- a. The game is restarted with a drop ball when:
 - i. The ball is caused to go out of bounds simultaneously by two opponents.
 - ii. When the ball becomes deflated.
 - iii. When simultaneous fouls of the same degree occur.
- b. The spot of the drop ball is where the ball became dead, unless it is inside the goal area, in which case the ball will be dropped on the part of the goal area line which runs parallel to the goal line nearest to where the ball was when play was stopped. If the ball is caused to go out of bounds simultaneously by opposing players, then the ball will be dropped five yards inside the boundary line.
- c. The ball is dropped by an official from waist level to the ground between two opposing players. Other players may be positioned anywhere on the field, as long as they do not interfere with the drop ball.
- d. The ball shall touch the ground before it is played.
- e. **Penalty: If the ball is played before it touches the ground, an official shall drop the ball again. A second violation by the same player on the same drop ball situation may result in a caution (yellow card). Play shall be restarted with a drop ball.**

4. Scoring

- a. A goal is scored when an entire ball passes beyond the goal line within the area of the goal provided it has not been deliberately thrown, carried, or propelled by the hand or arm of a player of the attacking team.
- b. A goal MAY be scored during play directly from a:
 - i. Kickoff.
 - ii. Direct free kick.
 - iii. Goal kick.
 - iv. Penalty kick.
 - v. Corner kick.
 - vi. Goalkeeper's throw or drop-kick.
- c. A goal MAY NOT be scored during play directly from:
 - i. An indirect free kick.
 - ii. A throw-in.
 - iii. **Drop ball.**
 - iv. A free kick into a team's own goal.
 - v. A goal kick into a team's own goal.
 - vi. A corner kick into a team's own goal

5. Free Kicks

- a. Description of a free kick:
 - i. Direct - a goal may be scored against the offending team
 - ii. Indirect - a goal may not be scored unless the ball is played by another player from either team.
- b. Rules for a free kick:
 - i. Opposition players must be at least 6 yards from the ball until it is kicked.
 - ii. Any player of the offended team may take a free kick (in any direction).

6. Penalty Kick

- a. A penalty kick is awarded for any direct-kick offense of the rules by the defending team within the penalty area.

7. Offside

- a. There is no offside restriction for players.

FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

1. Spitting, Kicking, Striking, and Slide Tackling:

- a. A player shall not spit, kick, strike, attempt to kick or strike, or jump at an opponent.
 - b. A player shall not trip, or attempt to trip, an opponent.
 - c. A goalkeeper shall not strike an opponent by throwing or kicking the ball at an opponent or by pushing an opponent with the ball in hand.
 - d. A player shall not slide tackle.
 - i. Slide tackling is defined as a player leaving their feet and leading with their feet in the immediate vicinity of an opposing player.
 - ii. Contact does not have to be made.
 - 1. If contact occurs, a yellow card will be issued to the offending player.
 - 2. If significant, dangerous, or malicious contact occurs, a red card will be issued to the offending player.
 - e. **Penalty: Direct free kick.**
2. **Handling:**
- a. A player shall be penalized for deliberately handling, carrying, striking, or propelling the ball with a hand or arm.
 - b. The goalkeeper shall be penalized for deliberately handling, carrying, striking, or propelling the ball with a hand or arm unless the entire ball is within the penalty area.
 - c. **Penalty: Direct free kick.**
3. **Holding, Pushing:**
- a. A player shall not hold or push an opponent with the hands or arms extended from the body.
 - b. **Penalty: Direct Free Kick.**
4. **Charging:**
- a. A player shall be penalized for charging an opponent in a dangerous or reckless manner, or using excessive force.
 - i. An allowable fair charge is when opposing players make shoulder-to-shoulder contact while in an upright position and while within playing distance of the ball. Each player must have at least one foot on the ground and their arms held within the frame of their shoulders.
 - ii. **Penalty: Direct free kick.**
 - b. A player shall not charge into the goalkeeper in the penalty area unless the goalkeeper is obstructing the player or dribbling the ball with the feet.
 - i. An official shall disqualify any player who flagrantly fouls the goalkeeper in possession or control of the ball.
 - ii. Outside the penalty area, the goalkeeper has no more privileges than any other player.
 - iii. **Penalty: Direct free kick.**
 - c. The goalkeeper in possession of the ball shall not be interfered with or impeded in any manner by an opponent.
 - d. A player shall not charge into an opponent when neither player is within playing distance of the ball.
 - i. **Penalty: Indirect free kick.**
5. **Obstruction:**
- a. Obstruction is a deliberate act of a player, not in possession of the ball and/or not attempting to play the ball, of running between an opponent and the ball or using the body as an obstacle.
 - i. **Penalty: Indirect Free Kick.**
6. **Dangerous Play:**
- a. A player shall not participate in dangerous play, which is an act an official considers likely to cause injury to any player.
 - i. **Penalty: Indirect Free Kick**
7. **Restrictions on the Goalkeeper:**
- a. From the moment the goalkeeper takes control of the ball with the hands when playing as a goalkeeper within their own penalty area they have **six** seconds in which to release the ball back into play. Once the ball has been released into play, the goalkeeper may not

- touch it again with the hands until it has been played by a player of the same team outside of the penalty area, or by an opposing player anywhere on the field of play.
- b. The goalkeeper is not allowed to touch a ball deliberately kicked to them by a teammate with the hands.
- c. A goalkeeper may not touch the ball with their hands when receiving it directly from a throw-in by a teammate.
- d. **The goalkeeper may punt the ball.**

8. Misconduct:

- a. A player **or substitute** shall be cautioned (**yellow card**) for:
 - i. Entering or leaving the field of play, except through normal course of play, without the permission of an official.
 - ii. Persistent infringement of any of the rules of the game.
 - iii. Objecting by word of mouth or action to any decision given by an official.
 - iv. Unsporting conduct, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Unnecessary delay.
 - 2. Holding a shirt, short, etc. of an opponent.
 - 3. Deliberate verbal tactics.
 - 4. Encroachment.
 - 5. Intentionally handling the ball.
 - 6. Deliberate tactical foul.
 - 7. **Slide tackling with contact.**
 - 8. **Player who displays reckless behavior.**
 - 9. **Faking an injury or "diving."**
 - 10. **Excessive celebration, which is defined as any delayed, excessive, or prolonged acts by which a player attempts to focus attention on themselves and/or prohibits a timely restart of the game.**
 - a. **Penalty: A cautioned player shall leave the field and may be replaced; the cautioned player may not reenter the game until the next legal substitution opportunity.**
- b. A player **or substitute** shall be disqualified (**red card**) for:
 - i. **Second Caution**
 - ii. **Taunting - Use of word or act to incite or degrade another individual.**
 - iii. Exhibiting violent conduct.
 - iv. **Slide tackling with significant, dangerous, or malicious contact.**
 - v. Committing serious foul play;
 - 1. **A player anywhere on the field who illegally and deliberately handles a ball to prevent it from going into the goal.**
 - 2. A foul against an offensive player who is moving toward their offensive goal with an obvious opportunity to score.
 - vi. Spitting at another person.
 - vii. Leaving the team area to enter the field where a fight is taking place, unless summoned by an official.
- c. **A disqualified player cannot be replaced!**

FREE KICK

1. Description of a Free Kick:

- a. Free kicks shall be classified "direct", from which a goal may be scored against the offending team, or "indirect", from which a goal may not be scored unless the ball is touched by another player.
- b. All free kicks, with the exception of kickoffs and penalty kicks, may be taken in any direction. Free kicks are taken from the spot of the foul.

- c. Any free kick awarded to the defending team within its own goal area may be taken from any point within the goal area.
- d. Any indirect free kick awarded to the attacking team within its opponent's goal area shall be taken from the part of the goal-area line which runs parallel to the goal line at the point nearest the infraction.
- e. Any player of the offended team may take a free kick.

2. When Awarded:

- a. Direct free kicks are awarded:
 - i. If a player spits, kicks, strikes, attempts to kick or strike, or jumps at an opponent.
 - ii. If a player trips or attempts to trip another person.
 - iii. If a goalkeeper attempts to strike, strikes, or pushes an opponent with the ball.
 - iv. If a player, other than the goalkeeper in their own penalty area, deliberately handles the ball.
 - v. If a player pushes an opponent with the hands or arms extended from the body.
 - vi. If a player holds an opponent.
 - vii. If a player charges an opponent.
 - viii. If a player charges into the goalkeeper.
- b. Indirect free kicks are awarded and taken from the point of the infraction:
 - i. If the ball is played next by the kicker following the kickoff.
 - ii. If a player fairly charges into an opponent while neither is within playing distance of the ball.
 - iii. If a player not in possession of the ball obstructs another who is attempting to play the ball.
 - iv. If a player attempts to kick the ball while in possession of the goalkeeper.
 - v. For dangerous play.
 - vi. If the goalkeeper takes more than six seconds before releasing the ball for play.
 - vii. If the goalkeeper illegally handles the ball while in their own penalty area.
 - viii. If the goalkeeper handles the ball after it is deliberately kicked by a player to their own goalkeeper
 - ix. If the goalkeeper handles the ball when receiving it directly from a teammate on a throw in.
 - x. If the goalkeeper handles the ball before it has been touched by another player.
 - xi. For temporary suspension of play for an injury or other special circumstance when a team is in clear possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage.
- c. How Taken:
 - i. Players opposing the kicker shall be at least 6 yards from the ball until it is kicked, unless they are standing on their own goal line between the goal posts. If the free kick is awarded to the defending team in its penalty area, players opposing the kicker shall be outside the penalty area in addition to being 6 yards from the ball and must remain there until the ball clears the penalty area.
 - ii. The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground at the spot specified by the official. To be in play, the ball shall be moved in any direction. If the free kick is awarded to the defending team in its penalty area, the ball is not in play until it is beyond the penalty area and into the field of play. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a re-kick.
 - 1. **Penalty: An official shall caution a player who fails to remove the required distance away.**
 - iii. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player.
 - iv. **Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the foul.**

3. Penalty Kick:

- a. A penalty kick shall be awarded when a foul, which ordinarily results in a direct free kick, occurs within the offending team's penalty area.

- b. All players, except the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper, shall be within the field of play but outside the penalty area and at least 6 yards from and behind the penalty mark until the ball is kicked.
 - c. The opposing goalkeeper shall stand on the goal line, between the goal posts, facing the kicker, until the ball is kicked. Lateral movement is permitted, but the goalkeeper is not permitted to come off the line by stepping or lunging forward until the ball is in play.
 - d. **Penalty (Articles 2 and 3): Encroachment by the defending team is not penalized if a goal is scored. If a goal is not scored, then the kick is retaken. If there is an infringement by the attacking team and the ball enters the goal, the goal does not count and the kick shall be retaken. If the ball does not go into the goal, there is no re-kick. If the ball rebounds into play, the game shall be stopped and restarted with an indirect free kick for the defending team at the spot of the foul. If the ball is saved and held by the goalkeeper, play shall continue. In cases where players from both teams infringe, the kick shall be retaken regardless of the outcome.**
 - e. The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground from the penalty mark. To be in play, the ball shall be moved forward. Once the kicker starts their approach toward the ball, they may not interrupt their movement. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a re-kick.
 - f. Infringements: If the referee gives the signal for a penalty kick to be taken and, before the ball is in play, one of the following occurs:
 - i. An attacking player infringes the Laws of the Game:
 - 1. The referee allows the kick to be taken
 - 2. If the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken
 - 3. If the ball does not enter the goal, the referee stops play and the match is restarted with an indirect free kick to the defending team.
 - ii. A defending player infringes the Laws of the Game:
 - 1. The referee allows the kick to be taken
 - 2. If the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
 - 3. If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken
 - iii. A player of both the defending team and attacking team infringe the Laws of the Game:
 - 1. The kick is retaken
 - g. After the penalty kick is properly taken, the ball may be played by any player except the kicker. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player.
 - i. **Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the foul.**
 - h. If necessary, a half may be extended to allow for a penalty kick.
4. **Throw-In From the Touchline:**
- a. A throw-in shall be awarded to a team when the opposing team last touches the ball before it entirely passes beyond the touchline either in the air or on the ground. A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.
 - b. The ball shall be thrown in any direction from the point where it crossed the touchline by a player who is facing the field of play and has both feet on the ground on or behind the touchline. The thrower shall use both hands and shall deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous movement.
 - i. **Penalty: Throw-in awarded to the opponent at the spot of the violation.**
 - c. An opponent shall neither interfere with nor in any way impede the actions of the thrower.
 - i. **Penalty: The official shall administer a caution for unsportsmanlike conduct.**
 - d. On a throw-in, the ball is playable when it has left the hands of the thrower and any part of the ball breaks the plane of the touchline. The thrower may not play the ball until it is touched by another player.

i. **Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.**

e. If the ball fails to enter the field of play on a throw-in, **the throw-in is retaken.**

5. **Goal Kick:**

- a. A goal kick shall be awarded to the defending team when the ball crosses the goal line after last being contacted by a member of the attacking team.
- b. Players opposing the kicker shall remain outside the penalty area until the ball has cleared the penalty area.
- c. The ball can be kicked from any point within the goal area. If the goal kick does not clear the penalty area and enter the field of play, then it shall be repeated.
- d. After the goal kick leaves the penalty the ball may be played by any player. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched by someone else.
- e. The goalkeeper shall not pick up the ball to put it into play.

i. **Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponents from the spot of the foul**

6. **Corner Kick:**

- a. A corner kick shall be awarded to the attacking team when the ball crosses the goal line after last being contacted by a member of the defending team. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- b. Players of the defending team shall be at least **6** yards from the **"corner arc"** ball until it is kicked.
- c. The ball shall be kicked from the ground within the quarter circle, nearest where the ball left the field of play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a re-kick.
- d. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player.

i. **Penalty: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the foul.**