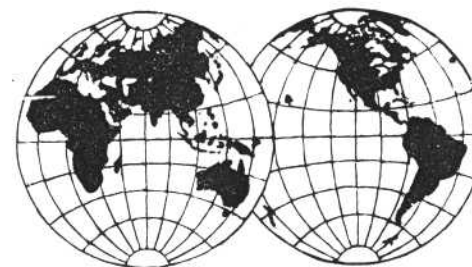


**FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE  
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

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**LAWS OF THE GAME**

**1948**

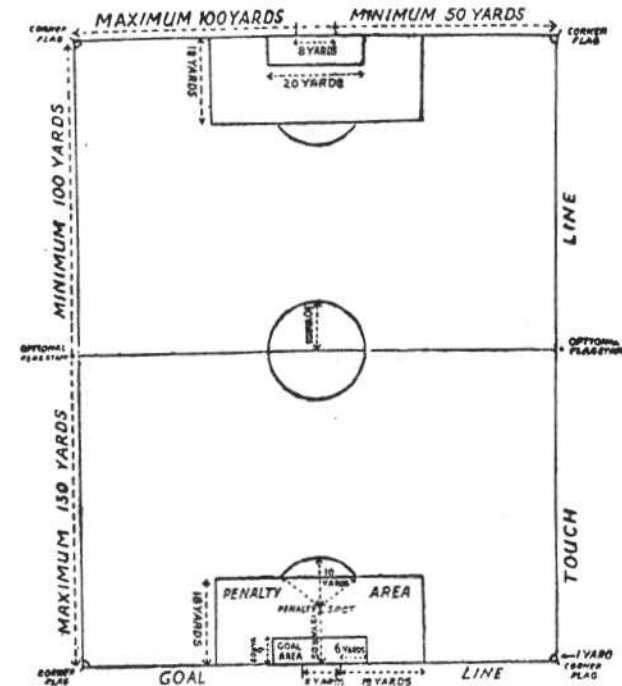
## LAWS OF THE GAME

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### LAW 1.—THE FIELD OF PLAY.

The Field of Play and appurtenances shall be as shown in the following plan:



(1) **Dimensions.** The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 130 yards nor less than 100 yards and its breadth not more than 100 yards nor less than 50 yards. (In International Matches the length shall be not more than 120 yards nor less than 110 yards and the breadth not more than 80 yards nor less than 70 yards.) The length shall in all cases exceed the breadth.

(2) **Marking.** The field of play shall be marked with distinctive lines not more than 5 inches in width, not by a V-shaped rut, in accordance with the plan, the longer boundary lines being called the touch-lines and the shorter the goal-lines. A flag on a post not

less than 5 ft. high and having a non-pointed top, shall be placed at each corner; a similar flag-post may be placed opposite the half-way line on each side of the field of play, not less than one yard out-side the touch-line. A half-way line shall be marked out across the field of play. The centre of the field of play shall be indicated by a suitable mark and a circle with a 10 yards radius shall be marked round it.

(3) **The Goal-Area.** At each end of the field of play two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the goal-line, 6 yards from each goal-post. These shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 6 yards and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal-line. Each of the spaces enclosed by these lines and the goal-line shall be called a goal-area.

(4) **The Penalty-Area.** At each end of the field of play two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the goal-line, 18 yards from each goal-post. These shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 18 yards and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal-line. Each of the spaces enclosed by these lines and the goal-line shall be called a penalty-area. A suitable mark shall be made within each penalty-area, 12 yards from the mid-point of the goal-line, measured along an undrawn line at right angles thereto. These shall be the penalty-kick marks. From each penalty-kick mark an arc of a circle, having a radius of 10 yards, shall be drawn outside the penalty-area.

(5) **Corner-Area.** From each corner-flag post a quarter circle, having a radius of 1 yard, shall be drawn inside the field of play.

(6) **The Goals** shall be placed on the centre of each goal-line and shall consist of two upright posts, equi-distant from the corner-flags and 8 yards apart (inside measurement), joined by a horizontal cross-bar the lower edge of which shall be 8 ft. from the ground. The width and depth of the goal-posts and the width and depth of the cross-bars shall not exceed 5 in.

Nets may be attached to the posts, cross-bars and ground behind the goals. They should be appropriately supported and be so placed as to allow the goalkeeper ample room.

#### Law 2.—THE BALL.

The ball shall be spherical; the outer casing shall be of leather and no material shall be used in its construction which might prove dangerous to the players. The circumference of the ball shall not be more than 28 in. nor less than 27 in. The weight of the ball at

the start of the game shall not be more than 16 oz. nor less than 14 oz.

#### Law 3.—NUMBER OF PLAYERS.

The game shall be played by two teams, each consisting of not more than eleven players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. One of the other players may change places with the goalkeeper during the match provided notice be given to the Referee before such change is made. Except in a match played under the Rules of a Competition, substitutes may be allowed to replace players receiving injuries during a game, subject to this arrangement being agreed upon by both teams before the start of a match. (An International Match in which one of the four British Associations is playing is deemed a match under the rules of a Competition.)

**Punishment.** If, without notifying the referee, a player changes to goalkeeper during the game, and then handles the ball within the penalty-area, a penalty-kick shall be awarded. Any player leaving the field during the progress of the game (except through accident) without the consent of the Referee shall be deemed guilty of ungentlemanly conduct.

#### LAW 4.—PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT.

A player shall not wear anything which is dangerous to another player. Boots must conform to the following standard: all **bars** and **studs** must be made of leather or soft rubber; nails shall be driven in flush with the leather or rubber; **bars** shall be transverse and flat, not less than half-an-inch in width, and they shall extend for the total width of the boot and be roundet at the corners; **studs** shall be round in plan, neither conical nor pointed, and not less than half-an-inch in diameter; **combined studs and bars** may be worn provided the whole conforms to the general requirements of this Law; **bars** and **studs** on the soles or heels shall not project more than half-an-inch. Metal plates, even though covered with leather or rupper, shall not be worn.

(N.B.—The usual equipment of a player consists of a jersey or shirt, short trousers, stockings and boots. A goalkeeper must wear colours which distinguish him from the other players.)

**Punishment.** For any infringement of this Law, the player at fault shall be sent off the field of play temporarily. He shall not return without first reporting to the Referee, who shall satisfy himself that the player's equipment is in order; the player shall only re-enter the game at a moment when the ball has ceased to be in play.

**LAW 5.—REFEREES.**

A Referee shall be appointed to officiate in each game. He shall:

(a) Enforce the Laws and decide any disputed point. His decision on points of fact connected with the play shall be final so far as the result of the game is concerned. His jurisdiction begins from the time he signals for the kick-off, and his power of penalising shall extend to offences committed when play has been temporarily suspended, or when the ball is out of play. He shall, however, refrain from penalising in cases where he is satisfied that by doing so he would be giving an advantage to the offending team.

(b) Keep a record of the game; act as timekeeper and allow the full or agreed time, adding thereto all time lost through accident or other cause.

(c) Have discretionary power to stop the game for any infringement of the Laws and to suspend or terminate the game whenever, by reason of the elements, interference by spectators, or other cause, he deems such stoppage necessary.

In such a case he shall report the matter to the Association under whose jurisdiction the game was played, within two days (Sundays not included). Reports will be deemed to be made when received in the ordinary course of post.

(d) Have discretionary power, from the time he enters the field of play, to caution any player guilty of misconduct or ungentlemanly behaviour and, if he persists, to suspend him from further participation in the game.

In such cases the Referee shall send the name of the offender to the Association concerned, within two days after the occurrence (Sundays not included). Reports will be deemed to be made when received in the ordinary course of post.

(e) Allow no person other than the players and linesmen to enter the field of play without his permission.

(f) Stop the game if, in his opinion, a player has been seriously injured; have the player removed as soon as possible from the field of play, and immediately resume the game. If a player is slightly injured, the game shall not be stopped until the ball has ceased to be in play. A player who is able to go to the touch or goal-line for attention of any kind, shall not be treated on the field of play.

(g) Have discretionary power to suspend from further participation in the game, without previous caution, a player guilty of violent conduct.

(h) Signal for recommencement of the game after all stoppages.

**LAW 6.—LINESMEN.**

Two Linesmen shall be appointed, whose duty (subject to the decision of the Referee) shall be to indicate when the ball is out of play and which side is entitled to the corner-kick, goal-kick or throw-in. They shall also assist the Referee to control the game in accordance with the Laws. In the event of undue interference or improper conduct by a Linesman, the Referee shall dispense with his services and arrange for a substitute to be appointed. (The matter shall be reported by the Referee to the National or Affiliated Association having jurisdiction over the offending Linesman.) The Linesmen should be equipped with flags by the Club on whose ground the match is played.

**LAW 7.—DURATION OF THE GAME.**

The duration of the game be two equal periods of 45 minutes, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, subject to the following: (a) Allowance shall be made in either period for all time lost through accident or other cause, the amount of which shall be a matter for the discretion of the Referee; (b) Time shall be extended to permit of a penalty-kick being taken at or after the expiration of the normal period in either half.

At half-time the interval shall not exceed five minutes except by consent of the Referee.

**LAW 8.—THE START OF PLAY.**

(a) **At the beginning of the game**, choice of ends and the kick-off shall be decided by the toss of a coin. The team winning the toss shall have the option of choice of ends or the kick-off.

The Referee, having given a signal, the game shall be started by a player taking a place-kick (i.e. a kick at the ball while it is stationary on the ground in the centre of the field of play) into his opponents' half of the field of play. Every player shall be in his own half of the field and every player of the team opposing that of the kicker shall remain not less than 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked-off; it shall not be deemed in play until it has travelled the distance of its own circumference. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been played or touched by another player.

(b) **After a goal has been scored**, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team losing the goal.

(c) **After half-time;** when restarting after half-time, ends shall be changed and the kick-off shall be taken by a player of the opposite team to that of the player who started the game.

**Punishment.** For any infringement of this Law, the kick-off shall be retaken, except in the case of the kicker playing the ball again before it has been touched or played by another player; for this offence, an indirect free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred. A goal shall not be scored direct from a kick-off.

(d) **After any other temporary suspension;** when restarting the game after a temporary suspension of play from any cause not mentioned elsewhere in these Laws, provided that immediately prior to the suspension the ball has not passed over the touch or goal-lines, the Referee shall drop the ball at the place where it was when play suspended and it shall be deemed in play when it has touched the ground; if, however, it goes over the touch or goal-lines after it has been dropped by the Referee, but before it is touched by a player, the Referee shall again drop it. A player shall not play the ball until it has touched the ground. If this section of the Law is not complied with the Referee shall again drop the ball.

#### LAW 9.—BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY.

The ball is out of play:

(a) When it has wholly crossed the goal-line or touch-line, whether on the ground or in the air.

(b) When the game has been stopped by the Referee.

The ball is in play at all other times from the start of the match to the finish, including:

(a) If it rebounds from a goal-post, cross-bar or corner flag post into the field of play.

(b) If it rebounds off either the Referee or Linesmen when they are in the field of play.

(c) In the event of a supposed infringement of the Laws, until a decision is given.

#### LAW 10.—METHOD OF SCORING.

Except as otherwise provided by these Laws, a goal is scored when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal-line, between the goal-posts and under the cross-bar, provided it has not been

thrown, carried or propelled by hand or arm, by a player of the attacking side. Should the cross-bar become displaced for any reason during the game, and the ball cross the goal-line at a point which, in the opinion of the Referee, is below where the cross-bar should have been, he shall award a goal.

The team scoring the greater number of goals during a game shall be the winner; if no goals, or an equal number of goals are scored the game shall be termed a «draw».

#### LAW 11.—OFF-SIDE.

A player is off-side if he is nearer his opponents' goal-line than the ball **at the moment the ball is played unless:**

(a) He is in his own half of the field of play.

(b) There are two of his opponents nearer to their own goal-line than he is.

(c) The ball last touched an opponent or was last played by him.

(d) He receives the ball direct from a goal-kick, a corner-kick, a thrown-in, or when it is dropped by the Referee.

**Punishment.** For an infringement of this Law, an indirect free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposing team, from the place where the infringement occurred.

A player in an off-side position shall not be penalised unless, in the opinion of the Referee, he is interfering with the play or with an opponent, or is seeking to gain an advantage by being in an off-side position.

#### LAW 12.—FOULS AND MISCONDUCT.

A player shall be **penalised** if he intentionally:

(a) Kicks, strikes, attempts to kick or strike, or jumps at an opponent.

(b) Trips, including throwing or attempting to throw an opponent by use of the legs, or by stooping in front of or behind him.

(c) Handles the ball, i. e. carries, strikes or propels it with the hand or arm. (This does not apply to the goalkeeper within his own penalty area.)

(d) Holds or pushes an opponent with his hand, or with any part of his arm.

(e) Charges in a violent or dangerous manner or charges an opponent from behind unless the latter be obstructing.

(f) Charges fairly, i. e. with the shoulder, when the ball is not within playing distance of the players concerned and they are definitely not attempting to play it.

(g) Charges a goalkeeper except when he is:

- i) holding the ball, or
- ii) obstructing an opponent, or
- iii) has passed outside the goal area.

(h) When playing as goalkeeper, carries the ball, i. e. takes more than four steps while holding the ball, without bouncing it on the ground.

(i) Joins his team after the game commences or returns to the field while the game is in progress, without reporting to the Referee.

(j) Plays in a manner considered by the Referee to be dangerous, e. g. attempting to kick the ball when held by the goalkeeper.

(k) Commits ungentlemanly conduct which shall be deemed to include:

- i) Persistent infringement of the Laws of the game, and
- ii) Showing, by word or action, dissent from any decision given by the Referee.

**Punishment:**

1. **Outside the penalty area:** For any infringement of a, b, c, d, e, a direct free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposite team from the place where the infringement occurred.

2. **Inside the penalty-area:**

A. For any infringement of a, b, c, d, e, by the attacking team the punishment shall be a direct free-kick for the defending team from the place where the infringement occurred. For an infringement of g the punishment shall be an indirect free-kick.

B. For any infringement of a, b, c, d, e by the defending team, the punishment shall be a penalty-kick. A penalty-kick can be awarded irrespective of the position of the ball, if in play, at the time an offence within the penalty area is committed, but it shall be awarded only for the following nine offences, intentionally committed by a player of the defending side within the penalty area:

1. Handling the ball.
2. Holding an opponent.
3. Striking or attempting to strike an opponent.
4. Pushing an opponent.
5. Tripping an opponent.
6. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent.

7. Jumping at an opponent.

8. Charging violently, or in a dangerous manner.

9. Charging from behind.

C. For any infringement of h the punishment shall be an indirect free-kick.

3. **Inside or outside the penalty-area.** For any infringement of f or j, an indirect free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposite team from the place where the infringement occurred.

4. For any infringement of i the offending player shall be cautioned and, if the game has been stopped, it shall be restarted by the Referee dropping the ball at the place where the infringement occurred, but if the player commits a more important offence he shall be penalised according to that portion of the Law infringed.

5. For any infringement of k the offending player shall be cautioned and an indirect free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposite team from the place where the infringement occurred.

A player shall be ordered from the field of play if he:

1. Persists in misconduct after having received a caution.
2. Is guilty of violent conduct, i. e. using foul or abusive language, or if, in the opinion of the Referee, he is guilty of serious foul play.

If play be stopped by reason of a player being ordered from the field for an offence without a separate breach of the Law having been committed, the game shall be resumed by an indirect free-kick to be taken by a player of the opposite team from the place where the infringement occurred.

**LAW 13.—FREE-KICK.**

Free-kicks shall be classified under two heads: «Direct» (from which a goal can be scored direct against the offending side), and «Indirect» (from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal).

When a direct or indirect free-kick is being taken, a player of the opposite side shall not approach within 10 yards of the ball until it is in play, unless he be standing on his own goal-line, between the goal-posts. If a player of the opposing team approaches within 10 yards before the kick is taken the Referee shall delay the taking of the kick until the Law is complied with. The ball

shall not be deemed in play until it has travelled the distance of its own circumference. The ball must be stationary when the kick is taken, and after taking the kick, the kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player. In the case of a free-kick being awarded to the defending side in the penalty-area, the goalkeeper shall not receive the ball into his hands in order that he may thereafter kick it into play beyond the penalty-area and if this part of the Law is not complied with the kick shall be retaken.

**Punishment.** If the kicker, after taking the free-kick, plays the ball a second time before it has been touched or played by another player an indirect free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the spot where the infringement occurred.

#### LAW 14.—PENALTY-KICK.

A penalty-kick shall be taken from the penalty-mark and when it is being taken, all players, with the exception of the player taking the kick, and the opposing goalkeeper, shall be within the field of play, but outside the penalty-area, and at least 10 yards from the penalty-mark. The opposing goalkeeper must stand (without moving his feet) on his own goal-line, between the goal-posts, until the ball is kicked. The player taking the kick must kick the ball forward; he shall not play the ball a second time it has been touched or played by another player. The ball shall be deemed in play directly it is kicked i. e. travelled the distance of its circumference and a goal may be scored direct from such a penalty-kick. If the ball touches the goalkeeper before passing between the posts, when a penalty-kick is being taken at or after the expiration of half-time or full-time, it does not nullify a goal. If necessary, time of play shall be extended at half-time or full-time to allow a penalty-kick to be taken.

##### **Punishment.**

(a) For any infringement by the defending team the kick shall be retaken, if a goal has not resulted.

(b) For any infringement by the attacking team, other by the player taking the kick, the kick shall be retaken, if a goal has resulted.

(c) For any infringement by the player taking the penalty-kick, a player of the opposing team shall take an indirect free-kick from the spot where the infringement occurred.

#### LAW 15.—THROW-IN.

When the whole of the ball passes over a touch-line, either on the ground or in the air, it shall be thrown in from the point where it crossed the line, in any direction, by a player of the team opposite to that of the player who last touched it. The thrower at the moment of delivering the ball must face the field of play and part of each foot shall be either on or outside the touch-line. The thrower shall use both hands and shall deliver the ball from over his head. The ball shall be in play immediately it is thrown, but the thrower shall not again play the ball until it has been touched or played by another player. A goal shall not be scored direct from a throw-in.

##### **Punishment.**

(a) If the ball is improperly thrown in the throw-in shall be taken by a player of the opposing team.

(b) If the thrower plays the ball a second time, before it has been touched or played by another player, an indirect free-kick shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred.

#### LAW 16.—GOAL-KICK.

When the whole of the ball passes over the goal-line, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by one of the attacking team, it shall be kicked direct into play beyond the penalty-area, from a point within that half of the goal-area nearest to where it crossed the line, by a player of the defending team. A goalkeeper shall not receive the ball into his hands from a goal-kick in order that he may thereafter kick it into play. If the ball is not kicked beyond the penalty-area, i. e. direct into play, the kick shall be retaken. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has touched or been played by another player. A goal shall not be scored direct from such a kick. Players of the team opposing that of the player taking the goal-kick shall remain outside the penalty-area whilst the kick is being taken.

**Punishment.** If a player taking a goalkick plays the ball a second time after it has passed beyond the penalty area, but before it has touched or been played by another player, an indirect free-kick shall be awarded to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

**LAW 17.—CORNER-KICK.**

When the whole of the ball passes over the goal-line, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by one of the defending team, a member of the attacking team shall take a kick from within the quarter-circle at the nearest corner flag-post, which must not be removed, i. e. a corner-kick. A goal may be scored direct from such a kick. Players of the team opposing that of the player taking the corner-kick shall not approach within 10 yards of the ball until it is in play, i. e. it has travelled the distance of its own circumference, nor shall the kicker play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

**Punishment.** For any infringement of this Law, an indirect free-kick shall be awarded to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

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