INDOOR SOCCER

LAWS
OF
THE GAME

Soccer Nova Scotia

Revised October 2026

Indoor Soccer – Laws of the Game

Law 1 – FIELD OF PLAY

- **Dimensions**
  The field of play must be rectangular. The length shall in all cases exceed the breadth. Where space is available, the recommended dimensions will be 61 meters by 30.5 meters (200 ft. by 100ft.)

- **Marking**
  The field of play shall be marked with distinctive lines not more than 10 cm (4 inches) in width. A halfway 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 five (5) meter (16 ft) radius marked around it.

- **Penalty Area**
  At each end of the field of play two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the goal line 6.25 meters (21 ft) from each post. These shall extend into the field of play for 10 meters (33 ft) and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal-line. The enclosed space is called the penalty area.

    - The total length of the penalty area will be 18 meters (59 ft).

- **Penalty-Kick Spot/Arc**
  On an imaginary line forming a right angle with the centre point of each of the end lines and at nine (9) meters (29.5 ft) from said lines there shall be a spot of 10 cm (4 in) in radius that shall be called the penalty-kick spot.

  From each penalty kick mark an arc of a circle, having a radius of five (5) meters shall be drawn outside the penalty area.

- **Corner Area Arcs**
  At each corner, a quarter circle having a radius of one (1) meter (3 ft 3 in) will be drawn inside the field of play.

- **Goals**
  These shall be located at the centre of each goal line, facing the internal part of the playing field. They are formed by two posts, fixed equidistant from the intersections of the end lines with the sidelines and 5.5 m (18') distance between the inner sides of the two posts. The posts will be joined by a crossbar whose inner side should be two (2) meters (6' 6") from the surface of the playing field.

- **Different field dimensions are used for Skill Centre divisions (U8/U9). Please review the Skill Centre Festival Guide.**

Law 2 – THE BALL

- The ball shall be spherical; the outer casing shall be of leather or other suitable materials. No material shall be used in its construction that might prove dangerous to the players.
    - For competitions, up to and including Under-12, the ball shall be a size 4.
    - For competitions, including U13 and above, the ball shall be a size 5.

- The ball shall be judged fit for play by the referee and shall not be changed during the game unless authorized by the referee.

Law 3 – NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- Games shall be played between two teams, each consisting of seven (7) players, one of whom is designated as the goalkeeper. A game will not start or continue if a team has less than five (5) players.

- **The only exception is the number of players per team for Skill Centre U8/U9 Divisions, each team consists of five (5) players, one of whom is designated as the goalkeeper.**

Substitutions

- Substitutes may be used in any match played under the jurisdiction of Soccer Nova Scotia and may either be "flying" in nature or made during a stoppage in play.

- A "flying" substitution is one that is made while the ball is in play and for which the following conditions apply:
    - "Flying" substitutions will take place along the sideline, between the team bench and the centerline and within three (3) meters (10 ft) of the centerline.

- When any player other than the goalkeeper is to be replaced, the substitute shall not enter the field of play until the player being replaced is within one (1) meter ("handshake distance") of the substitution area. Neither the player entering nor the player leaving may interfere with the play while both are on the field. The substitution is completed when the substitute enters the field of play, from which moment the substitute becomes a player and the player being substituted ceases to be a player.

- Unlimited substitution shall be allowed.

- Any of the other players may change places with the goalkeeper, provided that the referee is informed before the change is made, and provided also, that the change is made during a stoppage of the game.

Offences/Sanctions

- Play shall not be stopped for an offence of the paragraph above (goalkeeper substitution). The player(s) concerned shall be warned and/or cautioned immediately after the ball goes out of play.

- If during a player substitution, a substitute player enters the playing field before the player being replaced is within one meter, the referee shall stop the game. They shall warn and/or caution the substitute and restart the game with an indirect free kick to be taken by the team opposing that of the offending player from the spot where the ball was situated when the game was stopped (in accordance with Law 13).

Law 4 – EQUIPMENT

- A player will not be permitted to use any object that the referee may judge to be dangerous to other players. The referee will require players to remove equipment and jewelry that in their judgement can be dangerous to another player. If a player fails to carry out the referee's instruction, the player shall not take part in the match.

- The player's uniform consists of a shirt of long or short sleeves, shorts, socks, shin pads and appropriate footwear. The use of footwear is mandatory and what is appropriate will be determined by the laws of the indoor facility in which the game is being played.

- The player's shirt shall be numbered and each player of the same team must have a different number.

- Shin pads must be covered by socks.

- Team colors shall not conflict with each other or those of the referee.

- The goalkeeper will wear a uniform of different color from the other players and the referee. For protection, goalkeepers will be allowed to wear long pants.

Offences/Sanctions

- For any offence of this playing law, the player at fault shall be instructed to leave the field of play by the referee, when the ball next ceases to be in play, unless the equipment has already been corrected. Play shall not be stopped immediately for an offence of this playing law. A player who is instructed to leave the field to adjust equipment or obtain missing equipment shall not return without first reporting to the referee, who must ensure that the player's equipment is in order. The player shall only re-enter the game with the permission of the referee.

Law 5 – REFEREE

- A referee shall be appointed to officiate at each game and direct the game within the playing field. The authority and exercise of the powers granted to the referee by these playing laws commence as soon as the referee enters the field of play. The referee's powers of penalizing shall extend to offences committed when the ball is in play, the ball is out of play or play has been temporarily suspended. The referee's decision on points of fact connected with the play shall be final, so far as the result of the game is concerned.

- The powers and duties of the referee shall be as stated in FIFA: Laws of the Game, Law 5 - the Referee.

Law 6 – ASSISTANT REFEREES

- This law does not apply to indoor soccer

Law 7 – LENGTH OF THE GAME

- The length of the games will be 50 minutes, divided into two equal 25-minute halves.
    - **This includes Skill Centre U10/U11 Divisions.**

- The duration of any one of the halves will be extended to allow the taking of a penalty kick, even if the normal time has expired.

- The half-time interval shall not exceed three (3) minutes.

- Play may be extended to take a penalty kick only

- **The only exception is the game length for Skill Centre U8/U9 Divisions which is 25 minutes per individual game; two 25-minute games are played per festival.**

Law 8 – THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

- Preliminaries: A coin is tossed and the team that wins the toss decides to kick-off first or which end they will attack.

- Kick-Off: A kick-off is the way of starting or restarting play
    - at the start of the game
    - after a goal has been scored
    - at the start of the second half of the game, when applicable
    - at the start of each extra period of extra time, when applicable

- A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-off.

- **Kick-Off Procedure**:

  The referee having given a signal, the game shall be started by a player taking a place kick (a kick at the ball while it is stationary on the ground in the centre of the field of play) in any direction on the field of play. All players, except the kicker, shall be in their own half of the field and every player of the team opposing that of the kicker shall remain not less than five (5) meters from the ball until it is kicked. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

Offences/Sanctions

- For any offence of this playing 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, a free kick shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the offence occurred, subject to the overriding conditions as described in Law 13.

    - When restarting the game after a temporary suspension of play from any cause not mentioned elsewhere in these playing laws, provided that immediately prior to the suspension the ball had not passed over the touch or goal lines, the referee shall drop the ball at the place where it was when play was suspended, unless it was within the penalty area at that time, in which case it shall be dropped to the goalkeeper of the defending team. It shall be deemed in play when it has touched the ground.

Law 9 – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- The ball is out of play:

a) when it has crossed completely, whether on the ground or in the air, the sidelines or end lines;

b) when the game is stopped by the referee;

c) when the ball comes in contact with the ceiling or any apparatus hanging from the ceiling. Restart will be an **indirect free kick** for the opposing team of the one who last touched it. The kick will take place underneath the spot where the contact occurred, subject to Law 13.

- The ball will be in play on all other occasions, from the beginning of the game until its end, including:

a) if the ball bounces off one of the goalposts or crossbars;

b) if it hits the referee and play is not impacted. See the Laws of the Game related to referees being struck by the ball and the subsequent drop ball.

c) in the event of a supposed offence of the Laws of the Game until a decision is given by the referee.

Law 10 – METHODS 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 crossbar, provided it has not been touched, thrown, carried or intentionally propelled by hand or arm, by a player of the attacking side.
- The team which scores the greater number of goals during the game will be the winner. If there is an equal number of goals or if either competing team makes no goals, the game will be considered a tie/draw.

- For games ending in a draw, the competition laws may state provisions involving extra time and/or the "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark" (Appendix A) or other procedures to determine the winner of a game.

Law 11 – OFFSIDE

- **Offside will not be in effect for any age group or division for the Indoor season, with the exception of;**
- **U13 AA divisions which use two (2) officials and utilize offsides.**

Law 12 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

A player who commits any of the following seven offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick and opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent, including forcing into the walls or surrounding screens
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent
7. Tackles or challenges an opponent

or who commits any of the following six offences:

8. Impedes an opponent with contact
9. Bites or spits at or on an opponent
10. Holds an opponent
11. Handles the ball, i.e. carries, strikes or propels the ball with hand or arm (this does not apply to goalkeepers within their penalty areas)
12. Slide tackles or attempting to slide tackle while challenging an opponent for the ball
    - Sliding without close proximity to an opposing player, but making contact with the ball, will be considered blocking and will not be penalized in the Indoor game
    - Goalkeepers are allowed to slide within their area in an attempt to play the ball as long as it is not done in a dangerous or reckless manner
13. Throws an object at the ball, an opponent or match official, or makes contact with the ball with a held object

shall be penalized by the award of an **indirect free kick** to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the offence occurred, subject to the overriding conditions described in Law 13.

Should a player of the defending team commit one of the above thirteen (13) offences within the penalty area, the player shall be penalized by a penalty kick, regardless of the position of the ball, as long as it is in play.

A player committing any of the seven following offences:

1. playing in a manner considered by the referee to be dangerous
2. charging fairly, i.e. with the shoulder, when the ball is not within playing distance of the players concerned and they are definitely not trying to play the ball
3. when not playing the ball, impeding the progress of an opponent, i.e. running between the opponent and the ball, or interposing the body so as to form an obstacle to an opponent
4. moving with the goalkeeper while they are holding the ball in an effort to prevent the goalkeeper from releasing it
5. when playing as a goalkeeper and within the penalty area commits any of the following five offences:

a. takes more than eight seconds while controlling the ball with his/her hands, before releasing it from his/her possession
b. touches the ball again with their hands after it has been released from their possession and has not touched any other player
c. touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to their by a teammate
d. touches the ball again with their hands after they have received it directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate
e. wastes time

6. Is guilty of dissent, using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures or other verbal offences
7. During a "flying substitution" enters the playing field before the player being substituted is within one meter of the touch line.

shall be penalized by the award of an **indirect free kick** to be taken by the opposing side from where the infringement occurred, subject to the overriding conditions of Law 13.

A player shall be cautioned and shown the yellow card if, in the opinion of the referee, the player:

1. is guilty of unsporting behavior
2. shows dissent by word or action
3. persistently infringes the Playing Laws of Indoor Soccer
4. delays the restart of play
5. fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or a free kick
6. enters the field of play without the referee's permission other than in the act of substitution
7. deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission other than in the act of substitution
8. denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity with an offence, when challenging for the ball inside the penalty area. A penalty kick is awarded
9. slide tackles or attempts to slide tackle in a dangerous or persistence manner

If the referee stopped play to administer the caution, an **indirect free kick** shall be awarded to the opposing team from the place where the offence occurred, subject to the overriding conditions imposed in Law 13, unless a more serious offence of the playing laws was committed.

Team officials – Team officials may be warned, cautioned (shown the yellow card) or dismissed (shown the red card). Refer to the Laws of the Game for additional information.

A player shall be sent off the field of play and shown a red card if, in the opinion of the referee, the player:

1. is guilty of serious foul play
2. is guilty of violent conduct
3. bites or 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 a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)
5. denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity with an offence, punishable by a free kick, on an opponent when outside of the penalty area. Or, with no attempt to play or possibly to play the ball, by an offence when inside the penalty area and a penalty kick is given (refer to the Laws of the Game for more details)
6. uses offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
7. receives a second caution in the same match
8. Slide tackle and making contact with an opponent in a **Reckless or dangerous manner**

If play is stopped by reason of a player being ordered from the field of play for an offence without a separate breach of the playing law having been committed, the game shall be resumed by a free kick awarded to the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred, subject to the overriding conditions described in Law 13

Law 13 – FREE KICKS

- Free kicks shall all be classified as **"indirect"** (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).
    - **For the Skill Centre Divisions (U8/U9/U10/U11), all Free Kicks are direct. There are no indirect free kicks for these divisions.**
- When a player is taking a free kick inside their own penalty area, all the opposing players shall be at least five (5) meters from the ball and shall remain outside the penalty area until the ball has been kicked and moves.
    - **For Skill Centre Divisions, all the opposing players shall be at least three (3) meters from the ball and shall remain outside the penalty area until the ball has been kicked and moves.**
- If a player of the opposing team encroaches into the penalty area, or within five (5) meters of the ball before a free kick is taken, the referee shall delay the taking of the kick, until the playing law is complied with or retake the kick when an offence has occurred.
- The ball must be stationary when a free kick is taken, and the kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
- Any free kick awarded to the defending team, within its own penalty area, may be taken from any point within the penalty area.
- **Any offense awarded to the attacking team within its opponent's penalty area, shall be restarted with a penalty shot.**

Offences/Sanctions

- If the kicker, after taking the free kick, plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, an indirect free kick shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the spot where the offence occurred, subject to the above guidelines.

Law 14 – PENALTY KICK

- A penalty kick is a free kick taken from the penalty spot on the playing field. At the moment of the kick, all players, with the exception of the goalkeeper and the player taking the kick, should be inside the playing field, outside the penalty area, behind the ball and at least five (5) meters from the ball.
    - **There is no penalty spot marked on the field for Skill Centre U8/U9 Divisions. Referees will need to walk out five (5) meters from the goal.**
- The goalkeeper should take their position on their goal line and between the goalposts and may not move forward off the line until the ball is kicked.
- The player taking the kick must kick the ball forward; they shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player.

- The ball shall be deemed in play directly after it has been kicked and moves. A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

- When a penalty kick is being taken during the normal course of play, or when time has been extended at half-time or full time to allow a penalty kick to be taken or retaken, a goal shall not be nullified if, before passing between the posts and under the crossbar, the ball touches either or both of the goalposts, or the crossbar, or the goalkeeper, or any combination of these, providing that no other offence has occurred.

Offences/Sanctions

- For an offence by the defending team, the kick will be repeated, if the kick did not result in a goal.

- For an offence by the attacking team, if a goal is scored it will be disallowed and the kick retaken.

- For an offence by the player taking the penalty kick after the ball is in play, a player of the opposing team shall be awarded an indirect free kick from the penalty mark.
- For an offence by a member of both teams, the kick shall be retaken unless a player commits a more serious offence.

- For an offence by the teammate of the player taking the penalty kick, committed after the ball is in play, a player of the opposing team shall take an indirect free kick, subject to the conditions described in Law 13.

- For an offence by both the goalkeeper and the kicker committed at the same time, the kicker is cautioned and play restarts with an indirect free kick for the defending team.

- For an offence where the goalkeeper offends:

    - if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
    - if the ball misses the goal or rebounds from the crossbar or a goalpost, the kick is only retaken if the goalkeeper's offence clearly impacted on the kicker
    - if the ball is prevented from entering the goal by the goalkeeper, the kick is retaken
    - If the goalkeeper's offence results in the kick being retaken, the goalkeeper is warned for the first offence in the game and cautioned for any subsequent offence(s) in the game

Law 15 – THROW-IN

- Not used in U8/U9 Skill Centre or U10/11 Skill Centre as they use a dribble in

- When the whole of the ball completely crosses over the touch line, play will be restarted with a throw-in by a player of the opposing team to that of the player who last touched it.

- The throw must be taken within one meter of the point where the ball crossed the line.

- The throw must be taken using proper procedures, meaning that at the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:

    - face the field of play
    - have part of both feet either on the touch line and/or on the surface outside the touch line.
    - use both hands
    - deliver the ball from behind and over the head
    - The player taking the throw shall not touch the ball a second time until it has been played or touched by another player.

- The players of the opposing team shall be no less than two meters away from the point at which the throw-in is being taken.
- The ball is in play as soon as it enters the field of play
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.

Offences/Sanctions

- If the thrower plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred, subject to the conditions of Law 13.

- If the throw-in is directly handled by the goalkeeper on the same team as the thrower, an indirect free kick will be awarded, subject to the conditions of Law 13.

- If an attempted throw-in does not enter the field of play, the throw will be retaken.

- If an opponent unfairly impedes or distracts the thrower, that player will be cautioned for unsporting behavior.

- For any infringements made by the thrower during the taking of the throw, the throw-in will be given to the opposing team.

Law 16 – GOAL KICK

- When the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, excluding that portion between the goalposts, either in the air or on the ground and having last been played by one of the attacking team, it shall be kicked by a player of the defending team.

- The ball shall be placed at any point within the penalty area

- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

- Players of the team opposing that of the player taking the goal kick shall remain outside the penalty-area and at least five meters from the ball until the ball has been kicked and moves.

- A goal may not be scored from a goal kick.

- **** See notes at end of the Laws on the application of the retreat line.**

Offences/Sanctions

- If the player taking a goal kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the offence occurred, subject to the conditions of Law 13.

Law 17 – CORNER KICK

- When the whole of the ball passes over the goal line excluding that portion between the goalposts, either in the air or on the ground having last been played by one member of the defending team, a member of the attacking team shall take a corner kick.

- For the corner kick, the whole of the ball shall be placed on, or within, the corner arc. For facilities without corner arcs, the ball shall be placed on the spot where the touchline meets the goal line.

- Players of the team opposing that of the player taking the corner kick shall not approach within five meters of the ball until it is in play, (kicked and moves) nor shall the kicker play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

- **A goal shall not be scored directly from a corner kick.**

- **U8/U9/U10/U11 may take a corner kick or dribble into play from the corner arc.**

Offences/Sanctions

- If the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall award an indirect free kick to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred, subject to the conditions described in Law 13.

Note:

The Retreat line

- The use of the retreat line will be applied in all levels of the game **U11 and below**.
    - **U8/U9** – the retreat line will be at the halfway line
    - **U10/U11** – the retreat line will be in each half, 1/3 of the length of the field

APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE TAKING OF KICKS FROM THE PENALTY MARK

In the event penalty kicks must be taken to determine the winner of a match the following conditions shall apply:

1. All dressed players (excluding any who were dismissed) shall be “eligible players” to take part in the kicks.

2. When a team finishes the match with a greater number of players then that of the opposing team, that team shall reduce its numbers to equate with that of its opposing team.

3. Before the start of "kicks from the penalty mark", and at any time during the kick from the mark, the referee shall ensure that only an equal number of players from each team remain within the centre circle and they shall take the kicks.

4. The referee shall choose, with the toss of a coin, the goal at which all the kicks shall be taken.

5. The referee tosses the coin a second time and the team whose captain wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick.

6. The referee shall keep a record of the kicks being taken.

7. Subject to the conditions below, both teams shall take 5 kicks, which will be alternately taken by the teams.

8. If, before both teams have taken five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks shall be taken.

9. If, after both teams have taken five kicks, both have scored the same number of goals, or have not scored any goals, kicks continue to be taken in the same order until one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.

10. Each kick is taken by a different player and all eligible players must take a kick before a player can take a second kick.

11. An eligible player may change places with the goalkeeper at any time when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.

12. Only the eligible players and match officials are permitted to remain on the field of play when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.

13. All eligible players except the two goalkeepers and the player taking the kick must remain at the centre line.