



2017-18 SOCCER RULES CHANGES and POINTS OF EMPHASIS (includes rationale and comments)

RULES CHANGES

4-1-1d	<p>If visible apparel is worn under the jersey and/or shorts, it shall be a single solid color matching the predominant color of the respective garment. Visible arm compression sleeves shall be a similar length, all alike and of a solid color matching the predominant color of the jersey. Visible leg compression sleeves shall be of a similar length, all alike and of a solid color matching the predominant color of the shorts.</p> <p>Rationale: Players often wear compression shorts which are longer than the short or jersey. They should be of the same color. This rule addition is needed to maintain consistency with current uniform rule requirements and color restrictions.</p>
4-2-1	<p>Exception 1: Deleted</p> <p>Rationale: With the adoption of the change related to the use of headgear as opposed to only headbands, this exception is no longer necessary.</p>
4-2-9	<p>A soft padded headgear that meets the ASTM standard is permitted.</p> <p>Rationale: This allows for the newer headgear styles that are currently in the market to be used that are not just headbands.</p>
5-1-3f	<p>Unless otherwise prohibited by the state association, electronic communication devices may be used to communicate with crew members.</p> <p>Rationale: This rule allows, but does not require, the use of common communication devices that are currently available and affordable. This will permit officials to utilize such equipment and improve communication allowing for a better officiated game, if permitted by the state association.</p>
8-1-3	<p>The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground in the center of the field of play and may clearly move in any direction.</p> <p>Rationale: Requiring that the ball move forward on the kickoff is meaningless in the modern game.</p>
10-1-3f	<p>A goal may not be scored directly from a kickoff into the kicking team's own goal.</p> <p>Rationale: This change retains consistency with the concept that a team cannot score against themselves from a free kick, as provided in 10.1.3 c, d and e.</p>

<p>13-1-2</p>	<p>All free kicks, with the exception of penalty kicks, may be taken in any direction. Free kicks are taken from the spot of the foul except for the reasons listed in 13-2-3, which are taken from the location of the ball when the referee stopped play. Free kicks resulting from fouls committed in the goal area are taken as described in 13-1-3 or 13-1-4. Indirect free kicks for offside (13-2-2b) are taken from the spot where the offending player interfered with play, interfered with an opponent or gained an advantage by being in that position.</p> <p>Rationale: The current rule also does not clearly identify where indirect free kicks for offside are taken. This change makes it clear.</p>
<p>14-1-4</p>	<p>The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground from the spot or any place on the penalty mark. To be in play, the ball shall be moved forward. The player taking the penalty kick is permitted to use a stutter step or a hesitation move provided there is no stopping and there is continuous movement toward the ball. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall be considered a violation by the attacking team and the appropriate penalties shall apply. Stutter-stepping is not an interruption in movement.</p> <p>Rationale: This addition of these sentences clarifies that the stutter step is allowed.</p>

MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

<p>3-3-2</p>	<p>Rule 3.3.3, Situations A through J should become Rule 3.3.2, Situations A through J. Rule 3-3-3 Situations K through P should become Situations A through F.</p>
<p>4-1-1</p>	<p>Shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards at the time of manufacture.</p>
<p>5-1-3c</p>	<p>Officials shall be dressed alike in the uniforms primarily consisting of predominantly black shoes and black knee socks with white horizontal stripes.</p>
<p>14-1-3</p>	<p>PENALTY KICK SITUATIONS: (14-1-2, 14-1-3, and 14-1-4)</p>

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

<p>Risk Minimization: Concussions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concussions continue to be a focus in soccer at all levels of competition. The NFHS has been at the forefront of national sports organizations in emphasizing the importance of concussion education, recognition and proper management. • Discussion of proper concussion management at all levels of play in all sports has led to the adoption of rules changes and concussion-specific policies by multiple athletic organizations, state associations and school districts. • Coaches and game officials need to become familiar with the signs and symptoms of concussed athletes so that appropriate steps can be taken to safeguard the health and safety of participants. • There continues to be concern from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) about the cumulative effects of non-concussive blows to the head and body in practices and games. • Research data is showing that there are significant impacts to the head when athletes are
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	<p>constantly “heading” the ball and in “free ball” situations where multiple players are positioning for control of the ball.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When an official sees an athlete, who exhibits, signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the official shall direct the athlete to the appropriate health-care professional. The athlete may only return if cleared by that appropriate health-care professional. In the event of a concussed athlete, coaches should review the NFHS guidelines on page 113 of the Rules Book.
Risk Minimization: Shinguards	<p>Shinguards are one part of several required pieces of soccer equipment. Coaches need to make sure to follow the requirements for proper fitting, verifying that the shinguards are not altered by the athlete are worn under the sock and are worn with the bottom edge no higher than 2 inches above the ankle. More importantly, the shinguard is required to be age-and size-appropriate. Coaches need to make sure that the required shinguard properly fits the respective player based on his/her age and size.</p>
Risk Minimization: Headgear	<p>Though not required equipment, soft-padded headgear is permitted to be used by any soccer player. The SMAC emphasizes that there is no research or data available that shows that wearing soft-padded headgear prevents or lessens the possibility of a concussion. The determination regarding wearing soft-padded headgear is entirely up to the individual or school district.</p>
Referee Communication and Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and effective communication among referees and with coaches and team captains is critical to ensure successful game management. Conducting a meaningful and thorough pregame with the head coach, captains and referee crew provides an opportunity to review important rule changes, ensure players are legally and properly equipped, discourage rough play and emphasize a zero tolerance for the use of offensive or abusive language or gestures. • Advancement in electronic communication devices will afford opportunities to improve communication among referees during run of play.
Restarts: Kickoff	<p>At the kickoff, the ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground in the center of the field of play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves in any direction.</p>
Restarts: Penalty Kicks	<p>Once the kicker starts his/her approach toward the ball, he/she may not stop his/her movement. A stutter-step is permitted; however, continuous movement toward the ball is required.</p>
Restarts: Location of Offside Restart	<p>Indirect free kicks for offsides are taken from the spot where the offending player interfered with play, interfered with an opponent or gained advantage by being in that position.</p>