

## Basic Soccer Rules

### No Hands, please

First, the rule for a hand ball includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder. Second, the proper way to look at this soccer rule is that a player cannot "handle" the ball. A ball that is kicked and hits a player's hand or arm is not a hand ball. This means that the referee must judge whether or not a hand ball is accidental contact or the player handled the ball on purpose to gain an advantage. There is also a situation in which the goalie cannot use his/her hands. This is sometimes called the back-pass rule. Goalkeepers cannot pick up a pass that came directly from one of their teammates. In this case, the goalkeeper must use his feet. If the goalie does pick-up the ball it will result in an indirect kick from where he/she touched the ball.

### Throw-ins

A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses a sideline and leaves the field. The two basic soccer rules for a proper throw-in are to have both feet on the ground and to throw the ball with both hands over the head.

### Corner Kicks & Goal Kicks

A corner kick or goal kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across the goal line – the end of the field. If the offensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a goal kick. If the defensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a corner kick. The goal kick is taken from anywhere inside the "goal area box". It can be taken by any player. The ball must leave the "Penalty Area" before anyone can touch the ball. If the ball does not leave the Penalty Area then the kick must retake. The corner kick is taken from the corner nearest to where the ball left the field.

### Fouls

The common rule of thumb on fouls is "If it looks like a foul, it probably is."

A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent. Bumping, leaning or going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for a ball is *not a foul* until the hands or elbows come up.

### Direct and Indirect Free Kicks

The simple difference between the two is this: On a **direct kick** you can score by kicking the ball directly into the goal. On an **indirect kick** you cannot score. An indirect kick must be touched by another player before it can go into the goal – that is the kicker and a second person. *You can tell whether the kick is direct or indirect by looking at the referee. For an indirect kick, the referee will hold one arm straight up in the air until the second person touches the ball. No arm up or pointing towards*

*the goal, it's a direct kick.* In general, a direct kick comes from a contact foul or hand ball. Everything else is indirect.

### **Penalty Kick**

A penalty kick results from a contact foul or hand ball by the defending team within the penalty area – the large box on either end of the field. So it's a type of direct kick also. The ball is placed on the penalty spot, in front of the center of the goal. All players must remain outside the penalty area and the penalty arc until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked. If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off of the goal or the keeper and stays on the field, the ball is "live" and anyone can play it.

### **Two-touch Rule**

A player cannot touch the ball twice in a row when putting the ball in play. You will see this called many times in youth soccer. It applies everywhere. You will see it frequently on kick-offs or direct and indirect kicks. If a player barely hits the ball and decides to take another kick at it, that is a two-touch. This also applies to throw-ins. A player cannot throw the ball in and then kick it.

### **Offside**

You cannot be offside on a corner kick, goal kick, or throw-in. Also, it is not an offense for a player to be in an offside position. The player must be involved in active play as determined by the referee to be called offside.

**A player is in an offside position if:** *he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.*

**For official NIRSA rulings go to:**

[http://www.wlu.edu/Documents/student\\_activities/NIRSA%20\\_%20Soccer.pdf](http://www.wlu.edu/Documents/student_activities/NIRSA%20_%20Soccer.pdf)