



IFAB's Laws of the Game

Changes and Clarifications

July 2024





IFAB's Law of the Game Updates

The purpose of this assignment is to present the main changes and clarifications in the Laws of the Game approved and published by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) for the **2024-25 season**.

The **2024-25 Laws of the Game**, including the changes and clarifications, go into effect on **July 1, 2024**. Competitions that started their season prior to July 1 have the option of implementing the changes earlier or to delay implementation until (but not later than) the start of their next competition.

This year's changes and clarification are minor compared to those in previous years. The changes and clarifications include those in IFAB's:





Contents

- Law 1 – The Field of Play
 - Goal line technology (GLT) clarification
- Law 3 – The Players
 - Additional permanent concussion substitutions
 - Team captain must wear an identifying armband
- Law 4 – The Players' Equipment
 - Players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shin-guards
 - Team captain must wear the captain's armband
 - Gloves included under “other equipment”
 - Goalkeeper tracksuit bottoms included under “other equipment”





Contents (Cont.)

- Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct
 - Clarification on non-deliberate handball offenses for which a penalty is awarded are to be sanctioned as attempt to play/challenge for the ball
- Law 14 – The Penalty Kick
 - Part of the ball must touch or overhang the center of the penalty mark
 - Encroachment by players only penalized if it has an impact; same approach as for goalkeeper encroachment

The assignment does not cover the updates for 'guidelines for temporary dismissals (sin bins)'. For information on this see IFAB's website (link included under Resources).





Details on Law Changes & Clarifications

The following slides cover the changes and clarifications to the IFAB's 2024-25 Laws of the Game.

- Only the amended text is presented, with the main changes to the Law highlighted in **red text**.
- An IFAB explanation is included, where applicable, after each item.
- A U.S. Soccer summary concludes each section.





Law 1 – The Field of Play



Law 1.11 – Goal Line Technology (GLT)

Principles of GL

- The indication of whether a goal has been scored must be immediate and automatically confirmed within one second by the GLT system only to the match official (via the referee's watch, by vibration and visual signal, **and/or via the referee's earpiece/headset**); it may also be sent to the video operation room (VOR)

Explanation

Clarifies that the GLT indication that a goal was scored can now also be communicated via the referee's earpiece/headset.





Law 1.11 – Goal Line Technology (GLT)

U.S. Soccer Summary

This update only impacts competitions (typically applies in the international and/or professional environments) that use GLT to indicate that a goal has been scored.

It describes another way to communicate to the referee that a goal has been scored.





Law 3 – The Players



Law 3.2 – Number of Substitutions



Additional permanent concussion substitutions

- Competitions may use additional permanent concussion substitutions in accordance with the protocol listed under 'Notes and modifications.'

Explanation

Competitions now have the option to use additional permanent concussion substitutions. The protocol details are contained in the 'Notes and modifications' section of the Laws of the Game.



Law 3.10 – Team Captain

Team Captain

- **Each team must have a captain on the field of play who wears an identifying armband.**
The team captain has no special status or privileges but...

Explanation

Teams must have a captain who can be easily identified by the referee. Armband details are outlined in Law 4.





Law 3.10 – Team Captain

U.S. Soccer Summary

Many, if not most, competitions in the grassroots environment use unlimited re-entry substitutions. Competitions (starting July 1) with limited or no re-entry substitutions will have the option to use additional permanent concussion substitutions.

- Review the substitution rules in the rules of competition for the games that you will officiate.

The Laws previously did not specify how the captain of the team was to be identified on the field during the game.





Law 4 – The Players' Equipment



Law 4.2 – Compulsory Equipment

The compulsory equipment of a player comprises the following separate items:

- Shin-guards – these must be made of a suitable material and be of an appropriate size to provide reasonable protection and be covered by the socks. Players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shin-guards...

Explanation

Clarification that players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shin-guards. Having provided this information in the definition of 'shin-guard' in the Glossary, it is now also included in text of the Laws.





Law 4.2 – Compulsory Equipment

- (compulsory equipment)

...The team captain must wear the armband issued or authorized by the relevant competition organizer, or a single-colored armband that may also have the word 'captain' or the letter 'C' or a translation thereof, which should also be a single color (see also 'General modifications').

Explanation

The captain must wear an armband which is simple and conforms to the requirements of Law 4 relating to slogans, statements, images and advertising. It may be issued or authorized by the competition organizer.





Law 4 - 4. Other Equipment

Non-dangerous protective equipment, for example **gloves**, headgear, facemasks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material is permitted, as are goalkeepers' caps and sports spectacles. **Goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms.**

Explanation

Reference to gloves has been included under 'Other equipment' to reflect the fact that they are widely used, especially by goalkeepers.

Reference to tracksuit bottoms for goalkeepers has been removed from 'Compulsory equipment' and included under 'Other equipment' to accurately reflect the fact that they are not compulsory.



U.S. Soccer's Summary

Currently, the laws ONLY state that shin-guards “must be made of suitable material to provide reasonable protection and covered by the socks.” Here, the update clarifies that shin-guards “must be of appropriate size” and indicates that the “players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shin-guards.”

Also, each team must have a team captain wearing an armband designed in accordance with the Laws

Lastly, goalkeeper gloves and tracksuit bottoms are now included in the Laws under “Other equipment”.



Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct



Law 12.3 – Disciplinary Action

Part 1 of 3

Cautions for unsporting behavior

- There are different circumstances when a player must be cautioned for unsporting behavior, including if a player:
 - ...
 - Handles the ball to interfere with or stop a promising attack, **except where the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offense**
 - **Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offense...**





Law 12.3 – Disciplinary Action

Part 2 of 3

Sending-off offenses

A player, substitute or substituted player who commits any of the following offenses is sent off:

- Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offense (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence outside their own penalty area...





Law 12.3 – Disciplinary Action

Part 3 of 3

Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO)

...Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offense, the player is sent off wherever the offense occurs (except a goalkeeper within their own penalty area). Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offense and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned.





Law 12.3 – Disciplinary Action

Explanation of Parts 1-3

Non-deliberate handball offenses are usually the result of a player attempting to play fairly, so when a penalty kick is awarded for such offenses, the same philosophy should apply as for offenses (fouls) which are an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball, i.e., DOGSO offenses result in a yellow card and SPA offenses result in no card. Deliberate handball remains a red card offense when a penalty kick is awarded, as it is similar to holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.





U.S. Soccer's Summary

- The referee needs to decide, did the defender make a deliberate (tactical) decision to handle the ball to deny the opposing team a goal or goal-scoring opportunity while inside the penalty area (PA)?
 - If the answer is yes, then the defender is shown a red card (RC) for DOGSO or Denying a goal and a penalty kick is awarded to the non-offending team
 - If no, then the decision will be a penalty kick and yellow card (YC). This is like situations when defenders are penalized with a yellow card when they commit a DOGSO or Deny a goal in the penalty area in cases where the offence was as an attempt to play the ball or challenge for the ball.
- Referees will also extend this same evaluation to situations for stopping a promising attack by deliberately (tactical) handling the ball inside the PA. If yes, then the defender is shown a YC, and a penalty kick (PK) is awarded. If no, then a PK is given but no misconduct (no YC).
- There is NO change for a tactical foul by a handball (deliberate or non-deliberate) offense outside the penalty area. DOGSO results in a RC and SPA in a YC.



Law 14 – The Penalty Kick





Law 14.1 – Procedure

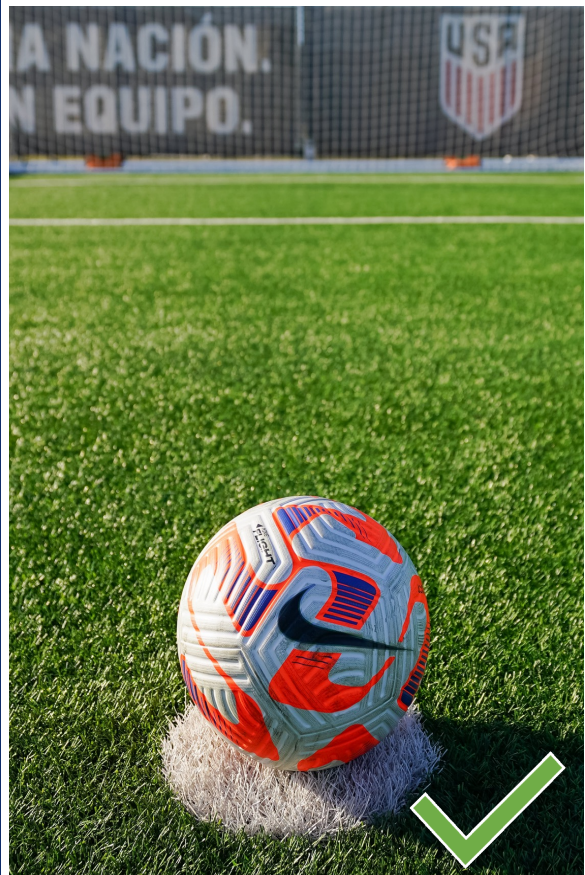
The ball must be stationary, **with part of the ball touching or overhanging the center** of the penalty mark, and the goalposts, crossbar and goal net must not be moving.

Explanation

Clarification regarding the ball position for a penalty kick, as there can be disputes and/or delays, especially when the penalty mark is not a 'spot'. Part of the ball must touch or overhang the center of the penalty mark (just as the ball must be inside the corner area, including overhanging the corner arc, at a corner kick). As with other positional matters, if ground conditions dictate a slight change, the decision should be made by the referee.



U.S. Soccer's Summary



Examples of the ball touching the center of the penalty mark (image on the left and image below).

Top view (below).



Example where part of the ball is overhanging the center of the penalty mark (below).

Top view (below).



Example of the ball **NOT** touching or overhanging the center of the penalty mark (below).

Top view (below).



The update clarifies and is consistent with many realistic situations observed by referees where the ball overhangs the center of the penalty mark.



Law 14.2 – Offenses and Sanctions

If, before the ball is in play, one of the following occurs:

- A teammate of the player taking the penalty kick is penalized for encroachment only if:
 - The encroachment clearly impacted on the goalkeeper; or
 - The encroaching player plays the ball or challenges an opponent for the ball and then scores, attempts to score or creates a goal-scoring opportunity
- A teammate of the goalkeeper is penalized for encroachment only if:
 - The encroachment clearly impacts the kicker; or
 - The encroaching player plays the ball or challenges an opponent for the ball and this prevents the opponents from scoring, attempting to score or creating a goal-scoring opportunity





Law 14.2 – Offenses and Sanctions

Explanation

Player encroachment can be difficult to detect and manage, especially at the lower levels of the game, where there may be no neutral assistant referees. However, it can easily be identified by the video assistant referee, and if Law 14 were to be applied strictly, most penalty kicks would be retaken.

Since encroachment rarely affects the outcome of the kick (only if the ball rebounds into play), the same principle should apply to player encroachment as to goalkeeper encroachment, i.e., it is penalized only if it has an impact.



Law 14.3 – Summary Table

Encroachment by:	Outcome of the Penalty Kick	
	GOAL	NO GOAL
Attacking player	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: indirect free kick No impact: no retake
Defending player	Impact: goal No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Defending & attacking players	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Offense by goalkeeper	Goal	<u>Not saved</u> : no retake, unless kicker is clearly impacted <u>Saved</u> : penalty is retaken and warning for goalkeeper; caution for any further offense(s)
Offense by goalkeeper & kicker at the same time	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Ball kicked backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
'Illegal' fainting	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker



U.S. Soccer's Summary

When a player encroaches before the ball is in play, the outcome of the kick (goal or no goal) is considered along with who encroached (an attacking player, a defending player, or both attacking and defending players) to determine the restart.

Starting July 1, 2024, referees must ALSO judge the impact of the encroachment.

Impact typically refers to:

- Playing or touching the ball
- Preventing an opponent from playing the ball
- Challenging or making a motion that influences the opponent



Source(s)



- IFAB's Law Changes 2024/25 document:
- English: [Law Changes 2024-25](#)
- Spanish: [*Cambios en las reglas 2024-25*](#)