

Introduction

The purpose of *The Plex Official Rules* is to help players, coaches, and spectators become familiar with the rules of outdoor soccer enough to play and enjoy the game without much effort. Referees are strongly urged to obtain the *Official Plex Rules* and to become certified through the state or with our facility.

THE OFFICIAL RULES OF THE PLEX OUTDOOR 7v7 SOCCER:

All guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Plex. Updated 1 MAY 2017

Rule 1 - The Ball

The ball is size 4 for U12 and below and size 5 for all U13 and older age divisions.

Rule 2 - The Players

Division Guidelines/Rostered Players:

(a) A player must be rostered and age appropriate to be eligible to play for any team at The Plex. Players in their respective league must be that age or younger on the first day of play. Birth certificates may be required upon request. Players in adult leagues must be a minimum of 15 years of age.

(b) It is the team's responsibility to make sure all players are rostered before their 4th game of the league. If a non-rostered or "illegal" player is found to be playing, the team will automatically forfeit all games the illegal player participated in or may be subject to suspension from the league.

(c) A player is not considered rostered until he/she has filled out and signed the roster waiver form (or a parent/guardian, if under 18 years old). A player may not be rostered for more than one team in any age division. Exception: A player may play in two different divisions within a specific age group. (i.e. U16 Boys A & U16 Boys B) The Plex reserves the rights to move players and/or teams between divisions at any time in the best interest of the league.

Numbers: Teams U12 and below shall have no fewer than 5 or more than 7 players on the field at a time, including a goalkeeper. For ages U13 and above, no fewer than 4 or more than 6 are allowed. In coed, there needs to be at least 2 female field players, not including the goalkeeper on the field. If one team is leading by 5 goals, the opposing team may add one player until the differential decreases to less than 5 goals. (There may only be (2) coaches per bench during the course of a game) At the start of a game

all teams need the minimum amount of players (based on age group) or they will be subject to forfeit after a 7 minute time frame.

Substitutions: Each team may substitute players freely; provided that (a) player(s) must substitute off the field of play or within the touch line in the area of their team bench, before a substitute may come in. (Must sub at the half line)

- 1) Any teammate may change places with the goalkeeper at any time as per regular substitutions, provided that the goalkeeper wears a jersey, which distinguishes him/her from other players. (Players must communicate a goalie change with the referee)
- 2) Free kicks, goal kicks, corner kicks and kick-ins shall not be delayed for substitution purposes.
- 3) If a team has more than the number of players allowed on the field at one time, a two-minute penalty may be assessed if referee feels it affected play, restart will go against offending team. (Restart will take place at the current spot of the ball when the whistle is blown)

Rule 3 - The Players' **Equipment**

Players wear their team's uniform, consisting of the same colors with visible number on jersey, shin guards, and proper footwear. Plex North participants can wear cleats for outdoor games while they can only wear indoor turf shoes or athletic shoes if games are moved inside. Players must wear shorts. (**Exception** goalkeeper is the only player allowed wearing pants.) Jewelry and other accessories are prohibited. The Goalkeeper wears jersey colors distinguished from all other field players and from the Referees. The visiting team shall change color or wear pennies in the event of a color conflict. Any injury equipment must be padded and to the satisfaction of the referee. All teams must have their own game balls. The referee will have one game ball for game use only. If that ball is lost or damaged the home team must provide a game ball, then the away team in the event the same occurs to the home team's ball.

Rule 4 - The Referee

The decisions of the Referee regarding facts connected with play and interpretations of the rules are final.

Rule 5 - **The Duration of the Game**

A regulation game consists of two 25 minute halves, and the following:

- (a) *Overtime Period and Tiebreaker.* See overtime rules for specific age groups.
- (b) *Running Cloclc.* Except in the case of an unusual delay, determined by the

Referee, the game clock counts down continuously through each half or overtime period. Game clock will be set to 27 minutes, in which teams will be given a running two minutes prior to the start of each game, and a running two minutes at halftime of each game.

Forfeit: A team has 7:00 minutes with a running clock to field a team. (see number of players section) **Exception:** If a team shows up after the allotted time, the opposing team may agree to play the game as an official game at the start of play. Time will not start over. In the event of a forfeit, referees are still inclined to ref the game play and will not be allowed to participate within the scrimmage.

Rule 6 - The Start and Restart of Play

A **Kickoff** from the center mark starts play at the beginning of each half and after every goal. (Kickoff may be played forward or backwards) A player who starts play may not again play the ball until it touches another player. The home team takes the kickoff for the first half kickoff and the visiting team takes the kickoff for the second half. Restarts take place by a kickoff, free kick, goalkeeper throw-in, or dropped ball. Other than for kickoffs or as provided below, restarts occur within three feet (3') from the spot of the ball at the moment of stoppage.

Rule 7 - The Ball In And Out Of Play

A team receives a Free Kick after stoppages other than when a dropped ball or goalkeeper throw-in is required. Before the team takes the free kick, the ball must be stationary. All free kicks are direct. All opposing players must be at least 5 yards from the spot of the free kick (or, if within 5 feet of the opponent's goal, along the goal line). The spot of the free kick is that provided above, except:

(a) Kick-In: from the point on the touch line nearest where the ball crossed over the perimeter line. Failure by a team to put the ball into play within five seconds after the referee has signaled and the ball is set shall result in a possession turnover to the opponent.

(b) Indirect Infraction: example (pass back, dangerous play, obstruction, or high kick) inside the penalty area by the defensive team will result in a direct kick at the top of the arc of the penalty area for the attacking team. Any other infraction inside the penalty area against the defensive team will result in penalty kick.

If neither team has clear possession of the ball at a stoppage, the Referee restarts play with a Dropped Ball.

Rule 8 - The Method of Scoring

A team scores a goal when the whole of the ball legally passes over the goal line.
(Defined by FIFA) A goal may be scored directly from a kickoff or restart.

Rule 9 - Fouls and Other Violations

A Foul occurs if a player:

- (a) Holds an opponent;
- (b) Handles the ball with their hands (except by the goalkeeper within his goalie box);
- (c) Plays in a dangerous manner;
- (d) Slide tackles (inside games only);
- (e) Impedes the progress of an opponent ("obstruction"), or
- (g) Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his/her hands; and when a player commits the following in a manner that the Referee considers careless, serious, reckless, or involving excessive force:
 - (i) Kicks an opponent;
 - (ii) Trips an opponent;
 - (iii) Jumps at an opponent;
 - (iv) Charges an opponent;
 - (v) Strikes or elbows an opponent; or
 - (vi) Pushes an opponent.
- (g) If a team has more than the number of players allowed on the field at one time
- (h) Touching the ball twice off a restart
- (i) Spitting on the field (Indoor Field)
- (j) Foul language

Unsporting Behavior: A free kick results for the following offenses:

- (a) Leverage: Using the body of a teammate or any part of the field to gain an advantage;
- (b) Encroachment: Entering the protected area of an opposing player taking a free kick (after initial warning);
- (c) Dissent:
- (d) Excessive celebration
- (e) Other: Behavior which, in the Referee's discretion, does not warrant another category of penalty (e.g., taunting, foul language.)

Goalkeeper Violations: The opposing team receives a free kick for the following violations by a Goalkeeper:

- (a) *Pass Back*: Handling the ball, having been passed deliberately and directly to him/her by a teammate; except that he/she may handle a ball which a teammate passes to him/her by the head, chest, or knee and without "trickery"
- (b) *5-Seconds*: Controlling the ball with his/her hands inside of his/her goalie box for over five (5) seconds.

Goal Kick/Goalie Save: A goal kick is awarded after an attacking player has last touched the ball on his/her attacking side and the ball crosses the end line. Play will be restarted with a goal kick in which the goalie or other player will kick the ball in from the six yard box. Ball must travel past the eighteen yard box before play may begin. Goalie may only roll the ball to himself/herself after a save. In the event that the goalie does not abide by this rule, an infraction will result in a direct kick to the opposing team at the top of the arc of the penalty area. The goalkeeper may score on the opposing goal by throwing the ball. Both youth and adult league goalkeepers may punt or drop kick the ball to the half line. In the event that the punt or drop kick passes the half line in the air, the defending team will be awarded a free kick at the center spot. GK can throw or put the ball on the ground and play it with their feet.

Team Violations: The Referee issues a team penalty for the following violations by a team or unidentified person:

- (a) *Leaving Team Bench:* Players leave a team bench to join a fracas or confrontation with the opposition or a game official;
- (b) *Bench Dissent.* After an initial "Warning," one or more unidentifiable players verbally abuse the Referee.
- (c) *Sixth Foul:* A team will be issued a penalty shot after 6 consecutive fouls during one half of play. ("Adult leagues only" Fouls are reset after each half or period)
- (d) *Other.* Unsporting behavior, which, in the Referee's discretion, does not warrant another category of penalty.

Advantage Rule: The Referee allows play to continue, notwithstanding the commission of an offense, when the team against which it has been committed will benefit from an existing offensive advantage.

Blue Card Offenses: Unless otherwise provided below, the Referee issues a blue card for serious fouls and for:

- (a) Deliberate handball or handball by a goalkeeper (outside of goal box);
- (b) Goalkeeper endangerment;
- (c) Unsporting behavior by a player; and
- (d) Team violations.

Cautioned Offenses: The Referee issues a yellow card for reckless fouls and offenses, and for the following:

- (a) Second blue card;
- (b) Unsporting behavior by any non-player personnel;
- (c) Provoking altercation: Making physical contact with an opponent (e.g., pushing or poking), short of fighting, or using the ball in so doing.

Ejectionable Offenses: A person receives a Red Card for Fouls and offenses, which the Referee considers violent or use of excessive force, and for:

- (a) Third-Time Penalty;

- (b) Elbowing: Intentionally elbowing an opponent above the shoulder;
- (c) Vicious Slide Tackling: A tackle from the side or from behind directly into one or both legs of an opponent, seriously endangering him/her;
- (d) Fighting;
- (e) Leaving team bench to engage in a fracas or confrontation with the opposition or a game official;
- (g) Extreme unsporting behavior: Committing particularly despicable behavior, including:
 - (i) Spitting at an opponent or any other person;
 - (ii) Persistent use of extremely abusive language or behavior toward a game official;
 - (iii) Bodily contact with a game official in dissent.

Rule 10 - Time Penalties

The following penalties apply to offenses for which a Card is issued (subject to further action by the administrative authority):

- (a) Blue Card: 2-minutes (i.e., in the Bench Area)
- (b) Yellow Card: 2-minutes for a second blue carded offense and 4-minutes (2 + 2) for a straight Yellow;
- (c) Red Card: Team will be penalized a player down for 5-minutes, plus player who receives the red card will be ejected from the game. Player will also be suspended for at least one week from any league play at either location and any Plex leagues. Player may not enter either facility during the extent of the suspension.

Short-Handed Play: For each Time Penalty being served by a player, his/her team plays with one fewer field player until its expiration; provided that a team may not have fewer than the minimum required, regardless of the number serving time penalties. Should a player receive a time penalty, while two or more teammates are already in the Penalty Area, his/her team continues to play with the minimum while he/she joins his teammates in the bench area.

Exceptions: Under the following circumstances, Time Penalties either expire prior to their completed countdown, or have the beginning of their countdowns delayed:

- (a) *Power play* Goal: If a team is scored upon having fewer players on the field of play, due to one or more players serving Time Penalties, a player from the team is released from the Penalty Area into the field of play, unless otherwise prohibited, and the player's penalty or penalties are wiped out. If the team has two players in the penalty area, only the player whose time penalty or penalties are recorded earlier is affected.
- (b) *Multiple Penalties*: If two teammates are serving time penalties when another teammate is penalized, his/her time penalty does not begin to count down until at least one of the teammates time penalties has expired and his time penalty is next to begin.

- (c) *Simultaneous Ejections*: When two simultaneous red cards carrying the same time penalties are assessed to opposing players; their time penalties are not served.
- (d) *Maximum Time Penalty*. No player may receive more than 5 minutes for penalties arising at the same time on the game clock, irrespective of the number or nature of accumulated offenses or the fact that one or more teammates may be designated to serve such time.
- (e) *End of Game*: All Time Penalties carry over between periods and expire at the end of the game. (In the event of a playoff game, time penalties carry over to overtime)

Delayed Penalty: In instances where the Referee would issue a Blue Card or a Yellow Card, but for the advantage rule, he/she acknowledges the offense by holding the card above his head until the earlier to occur of the following:

- (a) *Opponent's Possession*: The team of the offending player gains control of the ball;
- (b) *Stoppage*: The Referee stops play for any reason.

Once play is stopped, the offense is recorded and assessed, as customary.

Penalty Kick/Shootout: A Penalty Kick proceeds as follows:

- (a) The ball is placed at the Free-Kick Mark;
- (b) The goalkeeper has at least one foot on his goal line until the ball is in play; and
- (c) The player taking the penalty kick may not touch the ball again until after touching another player.
- (d) Penalty shootout will be issued for ages adult leagues when an opposing team reaches 6 fouls during a half of play. Ball will be placed on the opposing teams red line. All remaining players on the field must line up behind the midfield line. Once the ball is touched by the kicker the ball is live and the remaining players and goalie may play the ball. If the goalie fouls the kicker inside or outside of the penalty area the foul results in a penalty kick. After every subsequent sixth foul another shootout will be awarded. The clock does not stop. At halftime all fouls are reset to zero.

League Levels Guidelines:

*All these are guidelines, based upon individual perspective on their level, and experience. It is very important for all players to be conscious about the level they are signing up for. The director will have the discretion to advise different levels to teams if necessary.

World Cup (A): Top players who have played college, or professional, and are looking for the most competitive atmosphere

Semi-pro (B): Players who have played at a high level such as high school, club/travel, or college but have been away from the game and are looking for a more relaxed atmosphere, less competitive than world cup level.

Amateur (C): Players with little soccer experience or that have not played soccer competitively in many years, which are looking to compete on a recreational competitive level.

- Any youth "C" teams are not allowed to have any current travel players.
- Current "C" Divisions will be broken down into East and West based upon levels of play and days of play.

Beginner/For Fun (D): Players with very little or no soccer experience at all, that are looking to exercise, have fun and be social.

- All **4Fun** divisions are non-competitive/non-aggressive leagues designed for beginner player, the scores will not be posted, nor will they have a playoff to ensure the non-competitive environment.

League levels may also be sub-categorized, depending on availability of teams, days of play, and levels of teams in league. (Example: Men's B1, Men's B2...)

7v7 Rules and Format for Playoffs:

Tournament Seeding: If standings are tied after all games, positioning is as follows:

- a) Winner of Head to Head
- b) Least Goals Against
- c) Most Goals For
- d) Flip of Coin

Tournament Format:

- a) No Time-outs Referee may stop clock at his/her discretion, i.e. injury, cards
- b) One 25:00 minute regulation period
- c) Top seed has kickoff

Overtime Tournament Format:

- (a) If score remains tied after regulation (1) 2:00 minute sudden victory period with no goalkeeper and one less field player.
- (b) Overtime periods start with a drop ball
- (c) If score remains tied after first overtime, (1) 2:00 minute sudden victory period with no goalkeeper and three less players.
- (d) If a penalty kick is awarded in an overtime period, the defensive team may have a goalkeeper but may not use his hands. Penalties carry over into overtime periods. Substitutions are permissible during overtime periods.
- (e) If score remains tied after second overtime, teams will compete in a penalty shootout in a sudden victory format. Each team will pick (1) shooter at a time.
- (l) Team with better seed shoots second.