

SUMMARY of the

2020 Changes to the FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game

The following are the most applicable/significant changes affecting players:

1. The kicker at a kickoff does not have to be in his/her own half. Kickoffs do not have to move forward. (Law 8)
2. A goal *MAY* be scored against the opposing team directly from a kickoff, but not against one's own team. (Law 8) **BUT... USFF released a directive stating in the USA goals may NOT be scored from kickoffs in games sanctioned by them.**
3. On a Goal Clearance, the ball is in play once released by the goalkeeper. It no longer must exit the penalty area to be in play. Opponents must still be outside penalty areas on goal clearances. (Law 16)
4. When the defending team takes a free kick in their own penalty area, the ball is in play once the kick is taken; it does not have to leave the penalty area before it can be played a second time. (Law 13)
5. When there is a 'wall' of **two** or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1m of the wall; an attacker less than 1m from the 'wall' when the kick is taken will be penalized with an indirect free kick. (Law 13)
6. Ball placement on kick-ins must now be ON **or OVER** THE TOUCHLINE. No longer is it allowed to place the ball off the court up to 25 cm (10 inches) from the touchline for a kick-in. (Law 15)

The following changes should be implemented by referees:

7. If play is stopped inside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper. (Law 8)
8. If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the point of the last touch. (Law 8)
9. In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least **2m** away on a dropped ball. (Law 8)
10. If the ball touches the referee (or another match official) and goes into the goal, team possession changes or a promising attack starts, a dropped ball is awarded. (Law 9)

11. On Penalty Kicks (Law 14):
 - a. The team's penalty taker can have (quick) treatment/assessment and then take the kick
 - b. The goalkeeper must not be touching the goalposts/crossbar/nets; they must not be moving
 - c. The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken; cannot stand behind the line
12. Kicks from the Mark to determine a winner has been changed to start with a round of 5 kicks instead of only 3 kicks.
13. The choice between a yellow or red card when a player denies a goal or obvious goal scoring opportunity has been changed to align with soccer in regard to foul being inside or outside the penalty area. (Law 12)
14. If the referee is about to issue a YC/RC but the non-offending team takes the free kick quickly and creates a goal-scoring opportunity, the referee can delay the YC/RC until the next stoppage if the offending team was not distracted by the referee. NOTE: For a DOGSO offence, the player will be cautioned (YC) and not sent-off (RC) because the attack was re-started (as when advantage is applied for a DOGSO offence). (Law 12)
15. A team official guilty of misconduct will be shown a YC (caution) or RC (sending off). If the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach who is in the technical area at the time will receive the YC/RC. (Law 12)
16. A YC for an 'illegal' celebration (e.g. removing the shirt) remains even if the goal is disallowed. (Law 12)
17. The Referee's 4-second signal/count has changed from an overhead flipping of fingers to a chest level, swinging arm indication of time. (LOTG section titled "Referee and Other Match Official Signals")
18. Periods of play end when an acoustic signal (buzzer) by the Timer sounds. No score will be tallied if a ball enters a goal after the acoustic signal is initiated. So what this means is Timers shall no longer use a scoreboard's "auto-horn" feature but instead shall be watching play and shall wait if a shot is taken a fraction of a second before the clock reaches zero to view the outcome of the shot. When the outcome is determined, the acoustic signal is given. If no shot was taken close to zero, then the acoustic signal should be given at zero.

Prepared by the North Alabama *FUTSAL* League. Much of the text was taken from a presentation prepared by Kris Bailey, USSF Instructor.

