

Rules

Tournament of AC Sparta Prague Foundation



Number of players: 8+1 (eight field players + one goalkeeper)

Pitch: 72m x 56m

Playing time: 2x25 minutes (5 minutes break)

Ball: size 5

Rules: small football with offside

Back pass: backpasses to the goalkeeper are not allowed

Throw-ins: standard throw-ins by hand from the sideline

Substitutions: rolling (ice-hockey style) substitutions during play, including during active (non-stopped) play

RULE 1: GOALKEEPER PLAY, GOAL KICKS

1. The goalkeeper is not allowed to handle an intentional backpass. If a backpass occurs, an indirect free kick is awarded from the edge of the penalty area at the side where the offense occurred.
2. The goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball anywhere within the full width of the penalty area.
3. For a goal kick, the goalkeeper must restart play from the ground (ball placed on the ground).
4. When the goalkeeper passes the ball to a teammate, opponents may not challenge inside the penalty area until the receiving player has touched the ball. During a goal kick, opponents are not allowed to be inside the penalty area.

RULE 2: SET PIECES, SUBSTITUTIONS, OFFSIDE

1. Throw-ins are taken by hand. The defending player must stand at least 1 meter away from the thrower.
2. Free kicks taken in a team's own half are indirect; free kicks in the opponent's half are direct. The defensive wall must be at least 5 meters from the spot of the kick.
3. During a set piece, attacking players must remain at least 1 meter away from the goalkeeper.
4. Penalty kicks are taken from a distance of 7 meters from the center of the goal.
5. Substitutions are rolling and can be made at any time and from any position on the field, without stopping the play. The team must always have exactly 8 outfield players and 1 goalkeeper on the pitch.
6. A player may switch positions with the goalkeeper only when the ball is out of play, and only after notifying the referee, who must approve the change (by whistle, verbal confirmation, or hand signal).
7. The offside rule applies from the halfway line and across the entire opponent's half.

RULE 3: REFEREES AND PLAYER INFRACTIONS

1. The authority of the head referee begins once the signal to start the match is given, and applies to all infractions, including those occurring off the ball or during stoppages. Their authority ends only after the conclusion of the match.
2. The referee ensures the rules are observed, and their decisions relating to gameplay are final.
3. A referee may change a decision if they realize it was incorrect—either based on their own judgment or following communication from an assistant referee—as long as the game has not yet restarted.
4. Referee gestures must be clear and unambiguous. When issuing cautions or sending off players, the identity of the player must be without doubt.
5. Only the team captain is allowed to speak to the referee. In case of uncertainties, the captain may politely address the referee during a stoppage. If appropriate, the referee may respond politely, while ensuring the flow of the game is maintained.
6. The head referee must carry a whistle and a functioning timekeeping device. Yellow and red cards must be available; if not, verbal cautions or dismissals are issued with the same validity as physical cards.
7. The assistant referee supports the head referee from the opposite long side of the pitch.
8. All referees must be dressed in proper sportswear, with kit colors clearly different from both teams.
9. In cases of violent conduct or serious unsporting behavior, the referee has the authority to temporarily send a player off.
10. A sent-off player must leave the pitch area without unnecessary delay.
11. After 10 minutes, a substitute may enter the match for the dismissed player, if available:
 - a. This time period is **not** shortened if a goal is scored.
 - b. The countdown begins once the ball is back in play immediately following the dismissal.
 - c. The countdown is **not** affected by any additional dismissals.
12. If a substitute is sent off, the team continues with the same number of players on the field.

RULE 4: MATCH DURATION

1. Each match consists of 2 x 25 minutes of running time, with a halftime break of no more than 5 minutes.
2. The referee has the right to add time at the end of each half if time was lost due to injuries, ball retrieval delays, or intentional time-wasting (e.g., kicking the ball away). Time may also be added for the execution of a penalty kick. However, the referee is not required to allow the taking of other free kicks, restarts from the center circle, goal kicks, or to let an attack conclude.
3. The referee may not shorten the match duration. Upon mutual agreement of both teams, the halftime break may be skipped.
4. In knockout (playoff) matches, if the game ends in a draw, penalty kicks are taken immediately. Extra time is not played.
 - a. Each team takes five alternating penalty kicks, each by a different player.
 - b. If the score remains level, teams continue taking one penalty each until one team scores more goals after the same number of attempts.
 - c. No player may take a second penalty until all eligible players, including the goalkeeper, have taken one.
 - d. Then, a second round begins where each player may take another penalty.
 - e. Goalkeeper substitutions during penalties are unlimited.

RULE 5: START AND RESTART OF PLAY

1. The match begins with a coin toss between team captains. The winner chooses either the half of the field to defend or to take the kickoff. The other team receives the remaining option. At the start of the second half, the team that chose the side in the first half takes the kickoff.
2. The game is started (and restarted after a goal or at halftime) with a kickoff from the center circle. A goal may be scored directly from a kickoff. For other stoppages, play resumes according to the reason for the interruption.
3. Players from the non-kicking team must stand **at least 5 meters** away from the ball at restarts.
4. The ball is in play once it moves after a kick. The player taking the restart may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it.

5. The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed the goal line or touchline.

RULE 6: SCORING A GOAL

1. A goal is scored when the ball entirely crosses the goal line between the goalposts and beneath the crossbar, provided no rule was violated by the attacking team in the process.
2. Only the referee decides whether a goal is valid, and their decision is final. The position of the ball, not the goalkeeper, determines whether a goal has been scored.
3. A goal is not awarded if the ball enters the goal directly (without a deflection) from:
 - a. Into the opponent's goal – a goal kick is awarded:
 - from an indirect free kick
 - from a goalkeeper's throw
 - from a throw-in
 - b. Into the player's own goal – a corner kick is awarded:
 - from a throw-in
 - from any free kick
 - from a corner kick
 - from a kick-off
 - from a goal kick

RULE 7: POINTS AND RANKING CRITERIA

1. Points are awarded as follows:
 - 3 points for a win
 - 1 point for a draw
 - 0 points for a loss
2. If teams finish with equal points in the table:
 - a) Two teams tied:
 - Head-to-head result determines the ranking.
 - If the head-to-head match was a draw, the following criteria are applied:
 - i. Better overall goal difference
 - ii. Higher number of total goals scored
 - iii. Greater number of wins
 - iv. Draw of lots

b) Three or more teams tied

- A mini-league is created among the tied teams, using these criteria:
 - i. Head-to-head results
 - ii. Better goal difference in head-to-head matches
 - iii. More goals scored in head-to-head matches
 - iv. Better overall goal difference
 - v. More total goals scored
 - vi. More overall wins

RULE 8: PLAYER EQUIPMENT

1. Equipment consists of a jersey or shirt, shorts or tracksuit pants, and approved sports footwear. Playing shirtless is not allowed.
2. The goalkeeper's clothing must differ in color from both teams' kits.
3. Teams cannot play in similar color combinations. If this occurs, a coin toss between captains determines which team wears alternative vests.
4. Players may wear any type of permitted sports shoes, but cleats with screw-in or metal studs are prohibited.
5. A player may not wear anything that poses a safety risk to themselves or others (e.g., hard cast, rings, watches).
6. Players wearing glasses do so at their own risk.
7. A player with a bleeding injury must leave the field and may only return once the bleeding is properly stopped and the wound treated.