

Nelson Indoor Soccer

Laws of the Game ♦ 2017-2018

The indoor soccer rules combine aspects of FIFA Laws of the Game and the rules of hockey. As in outdoor soccer, fouls like tripping, pushing, striking, etc. are not allowed. Fouls occurring in the penalty area result in a penalty kick. Only the goal keeper can play the ball with their hands. Yellow card cautions are given for serious foul play and players are ejected (red card) for violent conduct. Players must wear shin guards and may not wear jewelry (may not be covered with tape). Like hockey, players can substitute on-the-fly and the ball can be played off the boards or glass. When a yellow card is given, the team plays one player short for two minutes; five minutes short for a “major” red card penalty. There are no off-sides. All free-kicks are indirect. This includes center kick offs after goals or to start each half.

Sliding and Slide Tackles

Slide tackling is prohibited, and results in an automatic yellow card. The exception is that the keeper may leave his feet, and otherwise slide within his/her penalty box, as long as they do so in a manner that would not be deemed a foul in outdoor soccer.

However, sliding, when not tackling an opponent, is allowed. Examples would include sliding to intercept a pass, to prevent a goal in your own net or to tap in a goal in the opposing net. The key element to make a slide legal is that it must not be a “tackle” in any way, and, to this end, the slide must not be near to an opposing player (i.e. no opponent can be within a specified distance – such as 2 meters – of the ball and the slide). Players must always demonstrate care, especially near the boards. Players may not put both hands on the boards for balance or shielding.

Player Equipment

Players must wear shin guards that are appropriate for their age and height; covering at least the lower 2/3rds of the lower leg. Socks must cover the entire shin pad. No jewelry, including fabric/woven bracelets and wrist watches, is allowed. Jewelry is not made safe by taping it. Players with new piercings that cannot be removed cannot play. Adults with plain rings, such as a wedding band, may wear them at their own risk. Pockets in shirt or short are not allowed. Athletic shoes, turf shoes and molded cleats are permitted. Long studs, metal studs or other dangerous variations are not appropriate for indoor turf and are not allowed. Any players wearing a brace need to cover it with protective material.

Game

Games start on the hour and consist of two - 25 minute halves with a five minute halftime break. Time is “running” and there is no added time for injuries, substitutions or malfunctions, although there could be an exception at the referee’s discretion, and within the time allotment available. When games are back-to-back, warm-up time is not allowed, unless the previous game finishes early. If teams are not ready by XX:05 (and you do not anticipate a forfeit), start the clock anyway. There is no coin flip. The “Home” team shall occupy the bench furthest from the scoreboard and have the first half kick-off attacking the goal at the scoreboard. The “Away” team shall occupy the bench nearest the scoreboard and, after the switch of sides at halftime, have the kick-off attacking the goal at the scoreboard. In the event that a penalty kick has been awarded and time expires before the kick can be taken, the kick shall be awarded with -0- time on the clock. During normal play, the entire ball must cross the entire goal line prior to the expiration of time for a goal to be scored.

Teams

Each team on the field consists of five (5) players, one of which is a goal keeper. A minimum of four players is required for the game to start. If a team cannot field at least four players at any time during the game, that team shall forfeit the game and the score be recorded as 3-0. In Co-ed League, 2 female players must be on the field at all times (excluding goal keeper). Only properly registered and insured players may participate in games. A team found to be using an unregistered player shall forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated. All players must play minimum of 4 games during the regular season in order to play in the playoffs.

Substitutions

Substitutions may be made during stoppages of play or “on the fly” similar to hockey. A team with a free kick does not need to wait for the opposing team to make substitutions.

When substitutes come on to the field, the departing player should be within 2 meters of the player bench and obviously not involved in the play before a fresh player participates in the game.

Not Allowed: If a player joining the play touches the ball before the player leaving has fully left the field, or if the player leaving the play touches the ball after the player joining the play has already entered the field, in either case a too many players on the field penalty, which is a yellow card, shall result.

Not Allowed: an attacking player jumps over the boards to join a break away while the departing player is 4 meters away from the bench, trailing the play. Again, a too many players on the field, yellow card penalty, shall result.

Infringements/Sanctions

Infringement	Restart	Shown	Penalty	Expires
Ordinary Foul	Indirect Free Kick			
Serious Foul Play Including physical challenge near the boards, slide tackle, unsporting conduct and too many players	Indirect Free Kick	Yellow Card	2 minutes (the offending player does not play, unless keeper. If keeper no specific player serves the penalty)	When opponent scores or 2 minutes, whichever is less
Violent/Excessive Force Including boarding, fighting, leaving the bench to join altercation	Indirect Free Kick	Red Card (ejected from game)	5 minutes (team plays short, but a specific player does not serve the penalty)	5 minutes, does not matter how many goals scored
3 rd Yellow	Indirect Free Kick	Red Card (ejected from game)	2 minutes (team plays short, but a specific player does not serve the penalty)	
Foul in penalty area	Penalty Kick			
Time Wasting	Indirect Free Kick	The team has five seconds to return the ball into play on an indirect free kick. If they fail to do so, the opponent had an indirect free kick from the same spot.		

Time Wasting

Time Wasting includes: Keeper holding the ball for more than 5 seconds or a player with an indirect free kick taking more than 5 seconds to put the ball in play. The referee is to count the 5 seconds once the ball has been placed for a free kick or once the keeper has the ball in the case of a keeper ball. At 3-4 seconds, say something like, "Let's go" to encourage the ball to be played. The referee shall use his/her discretion on the first couple violations of the 5 second time wasting rule by a team, and give them warnings as above. But, subsequently, if that team continues to violate this rule, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the other team instead.

Time Penalties

- Yellow card penalties to goalkeepers result in his/her team having to play shorthanded for 2 minutes (or until the other team scores), but the keeper does not have to leave the field. No specific player serves the penalty, but they must play shorthanded. The exception is red card ejections to a goal keeper, in which case the carded keeper is ejected from the game and must leave the field. His/her team must play shorthanded for the 5 minute penalty, after which an extra player may enter the field.
- When a player has been sent off, no specific player serves the 5 minute time penalty (or 2 minutes for a 3rd yellow).
- Field players receiving a Yellow Caution may not play during their two minute time penalty (unless a goal is scored).
- A team will play with no more than two players short (5 v 3).
- If a team is already two players down and a 3rd time penalty is given, the third player shall not participate in the game. The time penalty of the third player shall not commence until the time penalty of the first player has expired. The result is that the team will not have the services of that third player for, at least, the third player's two minute penalty and whatever time she had to sit-out while her team was down two players on the field.
- Time penalties begin when play is restarted. (A player receives a yellow card with 10:05 to play. It takes 90 seconds to get everything sorted out and resume play. The two minute penalty begins at 8:25 and ends, if no one scores, at 6:25.) Time penalties carry over to the second half.

Dangerous Play along the Boards

Contact near the boards has particular potential for serious injury, and shall be paid particular attention by referees, especially hits from behind within 2 meters of the boards. If, in the referee's opinion, the hit was deliberate, forceful or at all dangerous, a red card is to be issued (but the referee is to exercise discretion). If the player hit from behind into the boards is knocked down, then the red card is automatic, unless at the referee's discretion, there is strong reason not to issue the red card.

Unsporting Behavior: A Free Kick results for the following offenses:

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

Ball Out of Play

Ball Out of Play	Restart	Where
Ceiling	Indirect Free Kick	Directly below the place of contact
Netting above goal line off defender	Indirect Corner Kick	White line, about one meter from wall
Ceiling above penalty area off defender	Indirect Free Kick	On the top of the penalty area
Netting above goal line off attacker	Keeper's ball, live once he/she has possession	In the penalty box. Once the keeper has possession, they may throw it (to their teammates, but also down the field, including into the opposing net for a goal), put down/drop the ball and kick it or dribble it, including out of the box (they may not use their hands outside of the box). However, the ball is live, and once placed down, opposing players may run up, including into the box and play the ball, including scoring.
Ceiling above penalty area off attacker	Indirect Free Kick	Directly below the place of contact
Injury	Drop ball	Where ball was when play stopped
Goal	Kick-off	Center mark
Contact with wall above "glass" or a person on the bench	Indirect Free Kick	Near place of contact, 1 meter in from boards

Use of the Boards/Hands on the Boards

Players may not sit on the boards. Referee is to tell players not to sit on the boards. If a ball strikes a player who is on the board (thus out-of-play) award the indirect free kick to the other team, issue a time wasting yellow card and two minute penalty.

The ball remains in play if it rebounds off a goal cross bar or post, "board" or "glass."

Using the boards, briefly, to maintain balance is allowed. Using the boards to gain leverage, shield the ball or push an opponent away is not allowed. Consider:

- Reason
- Duration
- Gained advantage?

Usually, using two hands on the board is a sign that the player is gaining leverage; not allowed. Don't focus on the number of hands in contact with the board. Think about reason, duration and advantage. If a player puts his hands up on the boards so he does not fall over because of a defender challenge, it is probably the challenge that is illegal, not using the boards.

Allowed:

A player races to the corner, briefly puts hands on the boards to stop, and then engages in normal play. Players are engaged with each other near the boards in a manner that, if the boards were not there, play would be considered fair.

A player is looking away and reaches her hand out to touch the board in order to determine where it is (as in a corner kick).

A player is touching the board, but not pushing against and is not being challenged.

Away from the ball or other players, an attacker pushes against the board to propel himself back into play.

Goalkeeper Violations: The opposing team receives a Free Kick for the following violations by a gk:

- Pass Back: Handling the ball, having been passed deliberately and directly to him by a teammate; except that he may handle a ball which a teammate passes to him by the head, chest, or knee and without "trickery" (the use of a wall or foot to flick the ball to a head, chest, or knee before making the pass);
- 5-Seconds: Controlling the ball with his hand inside of goal crease for over five (5) seconds.

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

- Leaving Team Bench: Players leave a Team Bench to join a fracas or confrontation with the opposition or a Game Official;
- Bench Dissent: After an initial "Warning," one or more unidentifiable players verbally abuse the Referee.
- Other: Unsporting Behavior, which, in the Referee's discretion, does not warrant another category of penalty (e.g., too many players on the field.)

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.

Penalty Kicks

A Penalty Kick is awarded for any foul which (in outdoor soccer) would result in a penalty kick (i.e. occurs in the penalty box). Penalty Kicks are taken from a mark 1 meter outside the penalty area. All players must be at least 3 meters away from and behind, the ball.

Cautionable Offenses: The Referee issues a Yellow Card for Unsporting Behavior, serious and reckless Fouls and for:

- Goalkeeper Endangerment;
- Provoking Altercation: Making physical contact with an opponent (e.g., pushing or poking), short of fighting, or using the ball in so doing.
- Slide Tackle.

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

- Third Cautionable Offense;
- Elbowing: Intentionally elbowing an opponent above the shoulder;
- Vicious Slide Tackling: A tackle from the side or from behind directly into one or both legs of an opponent, seriously endangering him;
- Fighting;
- Leaving Team Bench or Penalty Area to engage in a fracas or confrontation with the opposition or a Game Official;
- 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.

An ejected player shall leave the area visible to the field of play for the remainder of the game (subject to further rules of the administrative authority), and the player's team shall play short-handed for 5 minutes. The player who enters the field thereafter shall await a game stoppage and so notify the referee upon entry.