

2026 Soccer Rules Summary—Men

24-Jul-26

All rules not mentioned in the summary will be governed by the NFHS and FIFA Soccer rules.

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Field

- The playing fields will measure 50–76 yards wide and 94–115 yards long.
- The field of play is divided into two halves, marked by a halfway line, with a goal area and penalty area on each side.

Uniform

- Shin guards **are required** and must be size appropriate.
- All players on a team (except for the goalkeeper) must wear matching jerseys, shorts, and socks.
 - Players **are not allowed** to wear other jerseys that were provided for another sport.
- At minimum, any participants shorts must be loose-fitting and able to reach the top of the kneecap while they are idle or standing.
 - Shorts **are not allowed** to be modified by having the band rolled up or legs tucked in.
- The goalkeeper will wear a color that distinguishes him from the other players.
- If a jersey or shorts given by the Collegian Sports department cannot be worn due to not meeting the dress code outlined by the [Student Handbook](#), the player can wear their own shirt or shorts that meet the dress code and that matches the team's uniforms as much as possible.

Equipment

- A regulation ball will be used as provided by the Collegian Sports Department.
- Equipment representing possible hazards to participants will not be permitted.
 - NO hats, jewelry, exposed metal or hard, unyielding plastic on braces, casts, etc. will be allowed. Only medical alert bracelets are permitted and must be taped to the wrist.
- Players must wear athletic-type shoes that cover the foot completely. Sports cleats are limited to studs with projections not exceeding ½ inch in length made from nonabrasive rubber or rubber-type synthetic material that does not chip or develop a cutting edge.
 - The officials and supervisors on duty have the authority to disallow any uniform, equipment, or shoe that they believe could endanger the person wearing the shoe or his opponents.

Team Composition

- Games are 11-on-11 and must have a minimum of 7 players to start a game. Game time is forfeit time if a team has insufficient players.
- Team rosters may include a minimum of 14 players and a maximum of 18. A player must be added to both electronic and paper team rosters before they are eligible to participate. Collegian athletic directors are responsible for keeping their collegian's electronic and paper team rosters current.

Collegian Sports:

Student Activities Office, AC-1
850-478-8496, ext. 2740

Game Line:

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Safety

- Any player visibly bleeding must leave the field and may return with the official's permission after the wound is cleaned and bandaged; clothing must be changed before a player may reenter the match if blood is visible and/or present.
- If in the opinion of the official, a player is exhibiting symptoms/signs or behavior consistent with an "apparent concussion," that player will be removed to seek medical attention and may not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.
 - A written medical clearance must be submitted to the Student Activities Office **before** the participant may resume participation in any Collegian Sports competition.

Game Format

- Games consist of two 30-minute halves (5-minute halftime). Officials will keep the time on the field.
- Teams are not granted timeouts, but officials may suspend time as necessary (e.g., injury).
- Regular season games that are tied at the end of regulation will result in a tie. Playoff games that end in a tie will be determined by two 5-minute "golden goal" OT periods followed by penalty kicks if the match is still tied at the end of the two OT periods.
- Mercy Rule:** The mercy rule will take effect when any of the following conditions are met:

Time	Goal Difference
5 minutes or less remaining	5+ goals
Anytime in the 2 nd half	8+ goals

Game Procedures

Coin Toss

- The captain of the away team calls the toss.
- The team that wins the toss decides between:
 - Which goal to attack in the first half
 - To take the kick-off
- The team that loses the toss will either take the kick-off or decide which goal to attack in the first half depending on the above decision.

Kickoffs

- For a legal kickoff, the ball must not be kicked until the official blows his whistle and then the ball must clearly move (movement in any direction is legal).
- Kickoffs are direct. (A goal may be scored on a kickoff).
- All players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play.
- The opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play.

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- The player taking the kick-off may not touch the ball again until it has been played by another player.

Out-of-bounds/Throw-ins

- The ball is out of bounds when it has wholly crossed the goal line or touchline whether on the ground or in the air.
- At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:
 - Face the field of play.
 - Have part of each foot on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline
 - Throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head from the point where it left the field of play
- A goal **cannot** be scored directly from a throw-in.
- All players must be at least 2 yards away from the point of the throw-in.
- The thrower may not play the ball again until it has been played by another player.
- If, on the throw-in, the ball is not inbounded before it touches the ground, a retake throw-in will be given.

Substitutions

- Unlimited substitutions are allowed.
- Both teams may substitute on goal kicks, kickoffs, injuries, and yellow or red cards.
- On throw-ins or corner kicks, the defensive team may substitute only if the offensive team substitutes.
- All substitutes must be beckoned on by the center official.
- Two players may not share the same jersey number during the same game.

The Goalkeeper

- The goalkeeper must release the ball within 8 seconds of controlling the ball.
Penalty: Corner Kick for the opposing team.
- The goalkeeper may use his hands to control the ball within the penalty box.
- The goalkeeper may not touch the ball with his hands when a player on his team deliberately kicks the ball to him or when receiving a ball directly from a throw-in.
Penalty: Indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- The goalkeeper may touch the ball with his hands when the ball is deliberately passed from his teammate's head, chest, or knee.
- Any player may change places with the goalkeeper, provided that the official is informed before the change is made and that the change is made during a stoppage of the game.

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Goals

- A goal is scored when the ball wholly passes over the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

Penalty kicks

- The ball must be stationary on the penalty mark.
- The player taking the penalty kick must be clearly identified.
- The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts until the ball has been kicked.
- The players other than the kicker and goalkeeper must be:
 - At least 10 yards from the penalty mark
 - Behind the penalty mark
 - Inside the field of play
 - Outside the penalty area
- After the players have taken positions in accordance with the rules, the official signals for the penalty kick to be taken.
- The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward; backheeling is permitted provided the ball moves forward.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.
- The kicker must not play the ball again until it has touched another player.

Direct kicks

Goal may be scored directly

- All corner kicks, goal kicks, and kickoffs are direct kicks.
- A direct kick is taken from the spot where the offense occurred in any direction, and all defensive players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
- Any kicking, tripping, jumping, charging, striking, tackling, pushing, holding, or handling will result in a direct free kick.

Indirect kicks

Must be touched by another player before a goal may be scored

- Indirect kicks will be awarded for dangerous play, impeding an opponent, or preventing the goalkeeper from releasing the ball.
- Indirect kicks will be awarded for any illegal handling by the goalkeeper inside the penalty area.
- Indirect kicks are taken from the spot where the offense occurred in any direction, and all defensive players must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.

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Offside

- A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponent's goal line than at least 2 opponents and the ball unless he is in his own defensive half.
- A player in an offside position is penalized only if at the moment the ball is touched or is played by a teammate, he interferes with either play or an opponent or gains an advantage by being in an offside position.
- There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from a throw-in, corner kick, or goal kick.

Disciplinary action:

- The official has the authority to take disciplinary action from entering the field of play for the pre-match inspection until leaving the field of play after the match ends.
- A player who commits a cautionable or sending-off offence, either on or off the field of play, against an opponent, a teammate, a match official, or any other person, is disciplined according to the offence.
- The yellow card communicates a caution, and the red card communicates a sending-off.
- Players who are shown a red card must leave the field of play and surrounding areas immediately. No substitution is permitted.
- Please see the *Sportsmanship Violation System* in the [Collegian Sports Guidelines](#) for more information.

Game Cancellations

- A game may be canceled at any point due to inclement weather.
- If a game is canceled and the 1st half is complete, it is considered a complete game. The score will stand as it was at the end of the 1st half. (Example: If it rains at halftime or in the middle of the 2nd half, the game stands as complete and the score remains as it was when the game was stopped.)
- If a game is canceled and the 1st half is not complete, the game will be rescheduled. The rescheduled game will begin where the canceled game stopped (i.e., time remaining, score, possession of the ball, etc.) (Example: If it rains at the 20:55 mark of the 1st half with the score of 1-2 in Team B's favor, and Team B has possession of the ball, the game will resume at the rescheduled date with the score of 1 – 2, a time of 20:55 in the 1st half, and the team in possession of the ball [Team B kickoff] as it was when it was rained out.)
- If possible, games that are canceled prior to being played due to weather or poor playing conditions will be rescheduled. Please check [game schedule](#) for exact game times, dates, and locations.

Teams will meet for prayer on the field 1 minute before the start of each game. The captain of the *home* team prays.

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