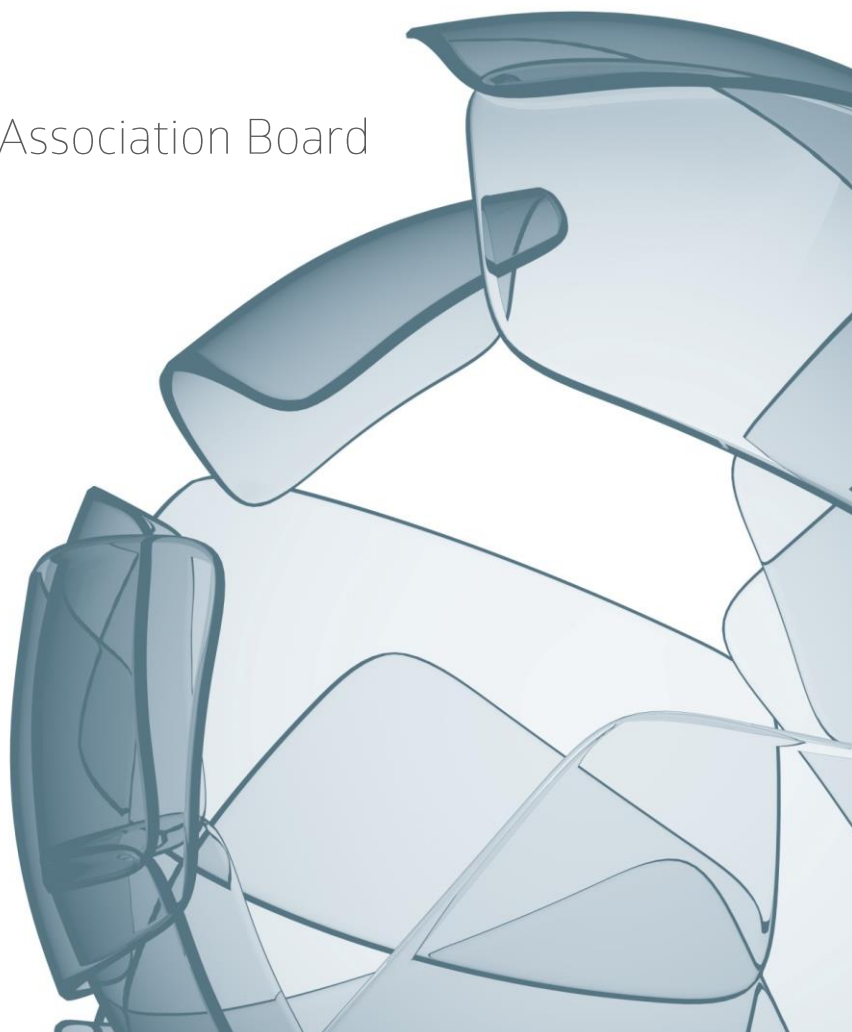


Laws of the Game 2016/17

Summary of Law Changes for Players, Coaches and Media

The International Football Association Board

May 2016



Introduction

The 130th AGM of The International FA Board (The IFAB) held in Cardiff on 5 March 2016 approved the most comprehensive revision of the Laws of the Game in The IFAB's 130 year history.

One aim was to make it easier for everyone involved with football to read and understand the Laws and, to achieve this, the Law book has been restructured and more than 10,000 words removed.

Another aim was to ensure that the Laws are appropriate for football in the 21st Century and changes have been made so that the Laws are up to date, consistent and promote 'fair play'.

The IFAB believes it would be helpful for players and coaches, and other interested parties such as spectators, the media etc. to have a summary of those Law changes which affect how football is played.

This document thus contains a summary of these main changes. The exact wording in can be found the Laws of the Game 2016/17 book.

The electronic version of the Laws of the Game 2016/17 can be downloaded from The IFAB's website (www.theifab.com) which also contains:

- '*Summary of Law Changes: Law by Law*' - a summary of the changes in Law order
- '*Summary of Law Changes for Competition Organisers and Administrators*' - a summary which focuses on the Law changes relating to administrative matters
- '*Law changes: Questions and Answers*' - the answers to a series of frequently asked questions about the Law changes

All Law changes are effective as from 1 June 2016.

For further information or for the answer to a specific question, please e mail lawenquiries@theifab.com

Summary of Law changes

These Law changes relate mainly to players and match situations

Ball hitting a match official

- If the ball hits a match official (including an assistant referee or AAR who is off/outside the field) play continues unless the ball went out of play

Denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO)

- If a player commits a DOGSO offence inside the penalty area it will now be a yellow card (caution) if the foul was an attempt to play the ball or challenge an opponent for the ball. However, the following offences will still be a red card (send-off):
 - Handball
 - Holding, pulling or pushing
 - Not attempting to play the ball
 - Not having the chance to play the ball
 - Serious foul challenges, violent conduct etc.

Equipment

- Any material on/covering the socks must be the same colour as the part of the sock it is covering (new wording covers all material, not just tape)
- Undershorts/tights must be the same colour as the main colour of the shorts or the lowest edge (hem); the team must wear the same colour
- A player who accidentally loses footwear(boot) or a shinguards(s) can continue playing until play next stops
- A player can return to the field during play after changing/correcting equipment once it has been checked (by referee, 4th official or AR) and the referee signals

Fouls

- If a foul involves contact with the opponent it is a direct free kick

Fouls off the field

- A foul off the field of play will be penalised with a free kick on the boundary line nearest to where the foul occurred (penalty kick if in offender's penalty area)

Goal kick

- An opponent who is in the penalty area when a goal kick is taken can not touch the ball until another player has touched it (indirect free kick if this occurs)

Handball

- Not all handball offences receive a yellow card (caution) – it usually depends on the effect/outcome of the handball e.g. stopping a promising attack

Interfering with play by a substitute or team official

- If a substitute, substituted player, team official or a player who has been sent off enters the field and interferes with play or an opponent it will be a direct free kick (penalty kick if in their own penalty area)
- If something or someone (other than a player) touches a ball which is going into the goal and it still goes in the goal, the goal can be awarded if the defenders were not affected and the ball does not go into the opponents' goal

Kick-off

- At the kick-off the ball can now be kicked in any direction, including backwards so no team-mates are allowed to stand in opponents' half

Offside

- The halfway line is 'neutral' for offside – the player must be in the opponents' half
- Players' arms and hands (including the goalkeepers) are not considered when judging offside
- Offside free-kicks will be taken from the place where the player commits the offside offence – this can be in their own half. A player can not be in an offside position in their own half but can move back into their own half from an offside position in the opponents' half and commit an offside offence (play the ball, challenge an opponent etc.) – this is where the free kick is taken from
- A defender who goes off the field over the goal line and stays off is considered to be on the goal line until play stops or the defender's team plays the ball towards the halfway line and it is out of their penalty area

Penalties (during normal play)

- If the goalkeeper moves early and causes the penalty kick to be re-taken, the goalkeeper will receive a yellow card (caution)
- If the ball is kicked backwards it is an indirect free kick
- If the kicker stops and 'feints' at the end of their run it will always be an indirect free kick and yellow card (caution) even if they score (i.e. no retake)
- If the wrong player takes the kick, that player will receive a yellow card (caution) and it will be an indirect free kick

Penalties at the end of a match (Kicks from the Penalty Mark)

- The referee will toss a coin to decide which goal to use, unless there are ground, safety or other considerations
- There is no need to tell the referee which players will take kicks or the order
- A player temporarily off the field at the final whistle (e.g. injured, changing equipment) can take part
- If one team loses a player during the kicks (injured, sent off) the other team removes one player (the same as at the end of the match)
- If a player leaves the field of play during the kicks, the kicks are not delayed and if the player is not back in time to take a kick then their kick is forfeited/missed
- A kick is completed/over when the ball stops moving (including being held by the goalkeeper), goes out of play or there is an infringement; the kicker can not play the ball a second time

Send off offences before the match

- A player may be 'sent off' any time after the referee enters the field of play for the pre-match inspection. If this happens:
 - before team lists have been submitted
 - the player can not appear on the list
 - after the team lists have been submitted but before kick-off
 - a player can be replaced by a substitute who can not be replaced
 - a substitute can not be replaced

In both cases the team starts the match with 11 players and can still make the maximum number of substitutions permitted

Sending-off offences

- Attempted violence is a red card (send off) even if no contact is made
- A player who deliberately strikes an opponent on the head or face will receive a red card (send off) unless the force used was minimal/negligible
- If a player commits a red card (send off) or second yellow card (caution) offence and the referee plays advantage, that player can not then be involved in play; the red card will be shown when play next stops. If the player becomes involved the referee will stop play, show the red card (send off) and award an indirect free kick

Substitutes

- A substitute can take any restart (including a throw-in or corner kick) but must first step onto the field of play (to complete the substitution procedure)

Throw in

- The ball must be thrown with BOTH hands and not thrown with one hand and 'guided' with the other

Treatment for an injury

- If a player is injured by a foul which results in a red card (send off) or yellow card (caution) for the opponent, the injured player can have quick assessment or treatment on the field and not have to go off; if the assessment/treatment is not quick the player will have to go off