



NCF Basic Laws of the Game

Laws of the game

The following is a summary of the main laws of the game, extracted from the FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game published by FIFA. Note that some modifications may have been introduced by NCF and these apply to NCF non-competitive (U7-9) competitions only.

Number of players and substitutions

- The game is played with 5 players one of which is a Goalkeeper and up to 5 substitutes per team. That is a maximum of 10 players may be registered for any one team.
- Unlimited substitutions may be made at any time during the game but must be made within the 5-metre sub zone, which starts 5 metres from either side of halfway on the Players' Bench side of the court only. The player being substituted must completely leave the court before the substitute player can enter play.
- The Goalkeeper substitutes in the same manner as the players and the game will not be stopped for the Goalkeeper to be replaced. However, in the U7 to U9 age groups the game may be stopped for a Goalkeeper to be replaced.
- Teams must change ends, including the Players' Bench, at half time so players can substitute in their own half from the 5-metre sub zone when in play.
- Please note that only the players/team officials change ends not the spectators.

Start of play

- The Referee will blow a whistle for the team Captains to come to the centre for the toss of the coin. The Referee will start the clock for kick off at the allocated time. The Referee will not wait for late teams to start the clock.
- All players must be in their own half of the pitch and the opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be behind the line as indicated by the referee (on multi-use courts) at least 3 m from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves in any direction. A goal **can** be scored directly from kick off.

Ball out of play and goal scoring

- The ball is out of play when the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line or touchline, and/or when the Referee has stopped the game.
- A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar. Note: A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in.

Free kick

- Free kicks shall be classified as "direct" (from which a goal can be scored directly against the offending side) and "indirect" (from which a goal cannot be scored directly must be touched by another player).
- The free kick must be taken when the ball is stationary and within 4 seconds from the time the player takes possession of the ball. Opposing players can form a defending wall but must be at least 5 metres away from the ball. Allied players must be at least 1 metre away from the wall.

Fouls and misconduct

- Fouls are penalised by the award of direct or indirect free kicks to the opposing team, and players will be cautioned for committing certain types of infringements (refer to FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game for details on the types of fouls and punishment). Note that at NCF 'slide tackles' are not permitted in the **non-competitive** age groups; U7 – U9. In the competitive U10 – U20 age groups slide tackles are permitted. As per the laws of the game, dangerous slide tackles are not permitted.
- A player shall be sent off the court if, in the opinion of the Referee, the player is guilty of serious foul play or violent conduct, uses foul or abusive language, denying the opposition a goal, or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, or is guilty for the second time of a caution-able offence. The player must then immediately leave the playing venue and cannot return to the venue until his/her penalty is served.

Accumulated fouls

- Beginning with the sixth accumulated foul, free kicks shall be taken without a defending wall being allowed by the opposition. The free kick shall be a direct shot at goal and, once the kick has been taken, no player may touch the ball until it has been touched by the Goalkeeper or has rebounded from the goal posts or cross bar or has left the court.
- Whenever an infringement occurs between the 10-metre imaginary line and the goal line it may be taken from the spot where it happened, or it can be taken back to the 10-metre penalty mark. This choice is given to the player taking the kick.
- The goalkeeper must remain at least 5 meters away from the ball up until the ball has been kicked.
- All other players must be behind the ball and at least 5 meters away.

Penalty kick

- Penalty kicks shall be awarded for infringements inside the penalty area, which warrant a direct free kick. The penalty kick shall be taken from the penalty spot, which is 6 metres from the mid-point of the goal line. All player except the kick taker and goalkeeper of the defending team must be behind the ball and at least 5 meters away.

Kick in

- When the ball has wholly crossed the touchline (sideline) it shall be kicked back into the game from the place where it crossed the line by a player of the opposing team to that of the player who touched it.
- The kick-in must be taken when at least part of the ball is on the line, the ball is stationary, and within 4 seconds from the time the player takes possession of the ball (no four second rule will be applied to any kick-ins non-competitive U7 – U9 games). Opposing players must be at least 5 metres away from the spot where the kick is being taken. A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in.

Goal clearance

- When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, excluding that portion between the goal posts, having last been played by the attacking team, the Goalkeeper, standing within his/her own penalty area, must **throw** it back into play. The ball **may** be thrown over halfway on the full or on the ground. There is a 4 second time limit for the Goalkeeper to release the ball into play from a goal clearance (no four second rule will be applied to any throw-ins non-competitive U7 – U9 games).
- If after having cleared the ball, and the ball does not go over halfway or is not touched by an opponent and is passed back by his/her team mate to the Goalkeeper, then it will be classed as a 2 touch and an indirect free kick will be given closest to where the Goalkeeper received the ball but must be given outside of the penalty area.
- Opponents must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.

Corner kick

- When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, excluding that portion between the goal posts, having last been played by the defending team, a corner kick shall be awarded to the attacking team.
- The corner kick shall be taken from the corner of the court inside the marked, or imaginary if not marked, quarter circle and within 4 seconds from the time the player takes possession of the ball (no four second rule will be applied to any corner kicks non-competitive U7 – U9 games). Opposing players must be at least 5 metres away from the ball where the kick is being taken.

Goal keeping rules

- When the Goalkeeper comes into possession of the ball in general play, the Goalkeeper may throw or kick the ball into play. The Goalkeeper must release the ball within 4 seconds of taking control of the ball. A goal may be scored by a kick but not by a throw, unless it touches a player from either side before it goes into goals.
- If the Goalkeeper has control of the ball inside or outside of the penalty area and in his/her own half of the court he/she has only 4 seconds to release the ball. If the Goalkeeper goes over the halfway line the 4 seconds does not apply nor does the 2-touch rule.
- If the ball is deliberately kicked back to the Goalkeeper by a teammate, the Goalkeeper cannot pick it up with his/her hands. The Goalkeeper may use his/her feet if the 2-touch rule is not applied.
- The Goalkeeper, after releasing the ball or throwing it clear, cannot receive the ball from a teammate, without it first having passed beyond the halfway line or having been touched by an opponent.