



Soccer Quick Guide Starts and Restarts and Understanding Offside



Kick Off (Direct Free Kick – DFK)

Kick is taken at the center mark and must be kicked and moves to be in play. All players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play. The defending team may not be closer than the center circle on their side of the field. The kicker may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it. Double touch results in an IFK for the other team. (Younger ages will have a redo for a double touch). If there is a coin toss, the winner may choose the kick or the side to attack.

Goal Kick (DFK)

The ball is kicked out over the goal line by the attacking team, and it is not in the goal. The restart is a goal kick from anywhere in the goal area (6 yards). The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. It can be played before leaving the penalty area. Defensive players can be in the penalty area to help the goal keeper. Attackers must be outside the penalty area until the kick is taken.

Corner Kick (DFK)

The defending team kicks the ball out at the goal line, and it is not a goal. The ball is placed in the corner arc nearest to where it went out and players stay 10 yards away. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. The ball does not have to leave the arc to be in play. There is no offside on the first touch, but the second touch could be offside unless there are two defenders closer to the goal than the offensive player.

Penalty Kick (DFK)

One of the DFK fouls has taken place in the Penalty Area. All players, except the kicker and the keeper, must be 10 yards away from the ball, outside the penalty area, outside the penalty arc, and behind the penalty mark. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. There are usually no penalty kicks for the younger ages, but check with the coaches for the local rules. If younger ages do not do penalty kicks, set up the ball on the 18 yd line for a direct free kick so they learn what a foul in that area means. The keeper must have one foot on the line and is not permitted to touch the cross bars or net or move off the line until after the kick is taken.



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Throw-In (No goal may be scored directly from the throw)

The ball is out of play when it has passed completely over the touch line in the air or on the ground. The throw-in is taken by the opposing team. The ball is in play when it crosses the touch line being thrown over the head with two hands with equal force in one motion. The thrower is behind the line or has one or both feet touching the line. The thrower must stand and face the field. The throw-in is taken 1 yard from where it went out and players are to not interfere with the throw by staying 2 yards away from the point on the touchline where the throw in is to be taken. If the thrower touches the ball before another player does, the double touch results in an Indirect Free Kick (IFK).

Drop Ball

The referee puts the ball in play by dropping it to the ground. If play is stopped inside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper. If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball. All other players must be 4.5 yds away. If the referee must stop play for an outside agent (ex. dog on field) or a bad whistle or for 'any undefined stoppage', the game is started with a drop ball. Stoppage for an injury will be restarted with a drop ball.

Direct Free Kick (DFK)

There are fouls that result in a direct free kick: Kick, Trip, Jump, Strike, Hold, Hand, Bite, Spit, Charge, Tackle, Impeding with Contact, and Throwing an Object. This includes attempting the foul or committing the foul. If fouls are just careless, a DFK is awarded. If these fouls occur in the Penalty Area, a Penalty Kick is the restart. If these fouls are considered reckless or excessive force, they may result in a caution or a sendoff. In some park districts these can be a 2-minute sit out or a sendoff. Check with the coaches for the local rules. Throwing an object recklessly is a caution. Throwing an object with excessive force is an ejection.

Indirect Free Kicks (IFK)

Usually, a double touch of the ball or offside. Others are dangerous play, impeding, preventing the keeper from releasing the ball, a stop for caution, or send off. The Keeper has 6 seconds before releasing the ball from their hands. The keeper may not touch the ball a second time. The keeper cannot pick up a ball kicked back to the keeper directly from a teammate. The keeper may not catch the ball from a throw-in by a teammate.



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Understanding Offside

You may be in an offside position without being penalized. If you participate in active play, block the keeper, or do anything in that position that makes you have an advantage by being there, you are offside. The restart is an IFK from where the offense occurred. A player is not in an offside position if: he/she is on his/her own half of the field of play or he/she is level with the second to last opponent (Goalie is the Last Opponent). Offside is at the time of the kick (pass, shot, etc.). Players should not be 'beyond the second to last defender.' Most park districts begin calling offside in 3rd grade. Offside is not called in the younger ages. Younger ages should not "cherry pick" meaning they should not stay by the goal area waiting for the ball.

The 8 restarts happen often in soccer. These are the typical frequencies in games: Throw-In, Goal Kick, Corner Kick, IFK, DFK, Kick-Off, Drop Ball, Penalty Kick