



FCA Soccer Rules – 3rd / 5th Grades

FCA Soccer Overview

FCA Soccer utilizes a set of unique rules that promote athletes' development in the sport as they learn and grow their skills and knowledge of soccer. The FIFA Laws of the Game will govern any area the FCA Rules do not cover. Basically, where the rules unique to FCA Soccer stop, the FIFA Laws of the Game begin.

A copy of the FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.FIFA.com.

Game Format

- Referees or coaches lead both teams in prayer at midfield before the game. This is a time to keep things in perspective and set the tone before the game.
- Referees will call all violations. Early in the season these violations should be explained as a teaching opportunity for all players. Explanations should gear down as the season progresses.
- The "home team" will start the game with the ball. The other team will start the second half.
- Games consist of two 18-minute halves, one minute for substitutions, and a four-minute halftime. This keeps games under an hour, which honors family schedules.
- The game clock is maintained by the referees and will only stop every 6 minutes for substitutions. This keeps games on schedule and honors the participants' time.
- Teams will switch goals at halftime.
- Score will be kept in each game and division standings will be maintained in each division. This adds fun and excitement to the league.
- All coaches will adhere to the substitution rules. This ensures every player is getting playing time over the course of the game.
- No yellow cards or red cards are used in FCA Soccer. If a player is "out of control" the referee and coach should discuss privately and make the best decision for the player and the other athletes. Many times, a simple "cool down" break on the sideline is all that is needed. Just substitute the player and coach them up on the sideline.
- There is no extended time in FCA Soccer. This keeps games on schedule and honors the participants' time.

Number of Players

Team Size: Eleven is the maximum number of players per team.

Team Format: 7v7 (includes goalie).

Additional Players: One additional player may be added to the field of play by a team that is four goals behind. The additional player may remain on the field until the score differential is three goals.

Game Duration

Game Clock: The game clock will be maintained by the referee.

Periods of Play: The game will consist of two 18-minute halves with each half being divided into three 6-minute periods.

Half-Time: Half-Time will be a 5-minute interval between the two 18-minute halves.



Substitutions

FCA Soccer gives coaches control of their substitutions with a few guiding rules to implement.

- The game will stop at the end of each segment for substitutions.
- Players should play a minimum of two full 6-minute segments, one in each half.
- Every player should start at least one game throughout the season.

Rules for FCA Soccer

- A kick-off begins each half and after a goal has been scored. Opposing players must remain outside the center circle or 4-yards away until the ball has been put in play. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 8.
- Fouls will result in either an indirect or direct kick. Opposing players must be 5 yards away from the ball.
 - *Indirect Kick:* A player other than the kicker must touch the ball before a goal can be scored. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 13.
 - *Direct Kick:* The kicker may score directly without another player touching the ball. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 13.
- Indirect kicks are awarded to the opposing team if one of these fouls is committed (For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 12):
 - Dangerous Play
 - Obstructing an opponent
 - Delay of game
- Direct kicks are awarded to the opposing team if one of these fouls is committed (for additional information, refer to FIFA Law 12):
 - Handling the ball
 - Kicking an opponent
 - Hitting an opponent
 - Pushing an opponent
 - Tripping an opponent
 - Holding an opponent
 - Any unsportsmanlike conduct
 - Slide tackling or any contact with the ball while the player is on the ground.
- A penalty kick is awarded for deliberate handling of the ball that denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity. The penalty kick will be taken 28ft from the goal line and all players should be positioned behind the player taking the penalty kick. If the kick does not result in a goal and the ball is still in the playing field, it is a live ball and play continues from the spot of the ball. See FIFA Law #14.
- A goal is not scored if a player kicks or throws the ball into his or her own goal. A corner kick is awarded for the opposing team.
- Offsides will be called. A player is considered to be offside if they are nearer to the opposition's goal line than both the ball and the opponent's second last player when they impact the play. A player cannot be offside if they are in their own half, if they are level with their last opponent when the ball is played to them or if the ball is played back towards them when they are in the opposition's half. A player is only penalized if they are in an offside position and are either interfering with play, interfering with an opponent or are gaining an advantage from being in that position.
- Referees should monitor substitutions and help coaches who have questions. Review the substitution section below.
- No Slide Tackling. Players must stay upright and "on their feet" and may not make contact with an opposing player. This does not prevent player from sliding to stop/intercept a ball, but No contact may be made with opposing players.



- Players who commit two fouls resulting in direct kicks, excluding handballs, in the same 6-minute segment must sit out the remainder of that segment. Those players may return during their next scheduled substitution.
- Heading is not allowed.

Goalie Rules

The goalkeeper is just like any other player, except when he/she is inside the penalty box. The number one main difference is that inside the penalty box the goalkeeper can touch the ball with any part of their body, most importantly their hands.

Rules for Goalies:

- Once in possession of the ball, they have 6 seconds to pass it to another player.
- They can kick or throw the ball to a teammate.
- Goalies cannot use their hands if the ball is kicked back to them from a teammate. This also applies on a throw-in, but is much less common.
- Goalies must wear unique clothing different from the jerseys worn by the other players. This helps the referees to recognize the goalkeeper.
- Once the goalkeeper puts the ball back into play on the ground, they can't pick it up again with their hands.
- When the goalkeeper has control of the ball, an opposing player may not touch it or try to kick it. If any part of the goalie is touching the ball, this is generally considered control.

Re-starts

Kickoffs

A kick-off is taken from the center circle at the start of each half and after a goal is scored. The ball must touch another attacking player or defensive player before the initial kicker touches the ball again. If the ball is touched a second time by the initial kicker before another player touches the ball, the kick should be retaken. The kick-off is treated similar to a free kick. This means the opposing team must stay outside of the center circle (at least 4 yards away). They also must be on their own half of the field until the first touch on the ball is made, after which they may attempt to win the ball.

Out-of-bounds

The entire ball must go out-of-bounds to be out of play. If part of the ball is still touching the line, play continues uninterrupted. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 9.

Corner Kicks

When the ball passes over the goal line by the defending team, the ball should be placed inside the corner arc on the side it went out-of-bounds. The defensive team must be at least 5 yards away when the kick is taken. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 17.

Goal Kicks

When the attacking team kicks the ball over the goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. The ball should be placed on the goal box line. The defending team must be at least at the red line (60 feet) away from the player taking the kick. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 16.



Throw-ins

- When the ball passes over the sidelines, the last team to touch it last loses possession and the opposing team takes a throw-in. The player throwing the ball back into play must throw the ball over his or her head with both hands, both feet must be touching the ground, and the player must stay behind the sideline while throwing. The defensive team must be at least two yards away from the thrower. It is recommended that the K4/K5 players place the ball on the touchline and kick it back into play. For additional information, refer to FIFA Law 15.
- To restart the game after the official had to stop play for a no-penalty situation, the team with last possession will take a throw in from that spot at the nearest sideline.

Dimensions

Ball Sizes:

The size of the soccer ball should grow as players age. The following is recommended:
3rd / 5th Grade = Size 4

Field Size:

7v7 soccer is best played on a field of approximately 90'x180'. This keeps the ball in close quarters for all players. That leads to more touches, which leads to more opportunities to develop skills.

Field Markings:

Center Circle – Full circle at the center of the field that measures a 12ft radius.

Corner Arc – 3ft radius from inside each corner of the field. This area is used for corner kicks.

Penalty Box: 34ft deep x 62ft wide

Goal Area: 15ft deep x 20 ft wide

Center Circle: 20 ft radius

Penalty Spot: 28 ft

Goal Size:

Goal sizes should be approximately 18ft-wide x 6.5ft-high.

Tournament Play and Shootouts

The season will end with a tournament. If the game ends in a tie, there will be a 5-minute sudden death followed by a shootout if needed. Shootout rules are:

- Each team takes alternating turns sending a player to the penalty spot to shoot against the opposing goalkeeper.
- No kicker can take another shot until every other player on his team has taken a shot.
- All other players for a team are allowed to line up on the midfield line. No other players aside from the goalkeeper and the kicker are allowed in the half. ...
- After each attempt, the kicker returns to the midfield line and the goalkeepers swap out.
- If before the fifth round, the trailing team has been mathematically eliminated from winning in five rounds, the shootout will end early.