

The Official Rulebook of Big League Soccer

Big League Sports is a SOCIAL co-ed sports league first and foremost.

This code of rules governs the playing of Soccer games in Big League Soccer divisions. Any rule or situation not expressly defined here will default to FIFA rules. All calls made by the Game Head Referee (GHR) are final.

#1. NO WHINING! – The first and foremost rule of the game is to have fun. If you are hoping to recapture your athletic glories from the past, this is not the league for you. Absolutely no whining will be tolerated during the course of a game. Be gracious whether you're winning or losing. This is a social league. Keep a relaxed attitude, meet new people, and have a good time.

#2. NO ALCOHOL AT THE FIELDS! – The consumption of alcohol is PROHIBITED BY STATE LAW at all Big League Soccer playing fields. Anyone seen violating field policies will be immediately asked to leave the grounds. Continued violations by individuals or groups will result in permanent removal of the players from the league and/or team forfeits. Individuals (players, fans, or friends of players), at the discretion of BigLeagueSports, will be ejected immediately if they are found bringing alcohol, weapons, or controlled substances to any venue or sponsor bar in use by BigLeagueSports; if they're suspected of excessive pre-game alcohol consumption; if they're suspected of abusing a controlled substance; or if they're deemed unruly or a danger to themselves or others at any time. Furthermore, anyone who is ejected from one of our venues or sponsor bars will be required to petition the League for reinstatement before participating in or attending any subsequent BigLeagueSports events. These policies are in place for the safety, enjoyment, and continued camaraderie of all players, the sponsoring venues, sponsor bars, and the entire league.

#3. THIS IS A NON-CONTACT LEAGUE –

SLIDE TACKLES – Slide tackles (determined at the Ref's discretion) are defined as plays in which a player leaves their feet to slide towards an opposing player who has the ball. Slide tackles will not be tolerated and are punishable by a yellow card. All players must try to avoid contact at all times. We understand that there will be incidental contact, and that some cases of incidental contact need not be penalized. However, any sort of intentional contact or reckless unintentional contact of any kind can result in a penalty, and in more severe instances an immediate ejection from the game without warning.

Yellow: Yellow cards are issued to players exhibiting any of the following behavior:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct
- Dissent by word or action to the Referee
- Delaying the restart (corner kick, free kick, goal kick, throw in, etc.)
- Failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted on a corner kick, free kick, goal kick, throw in, etc.
- Persistent fouling and physical play

Any Player receiving a yellow card must be Substituted for, and may not return until the next legal Substitution opportunity. If the Referee stops the game for an injury, the injured player must be Substituted for and must sit out for 5 minutes of game time.

RED: Red cards are notifications that a player has been sent off/ejected from the game. Red cards are issued to players exhibiting any of the following behavior:

- Serious fouls and dangerous play
- Violent conduct
- Spitting at an opponent, teammate and/or Referee
- Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity with a deliberate handball (does not apply to the goalkeeper within his/her goal box)
- Using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures at an opponent, teammate and/or Referee
- Receiving a second yellow card the game

#4. REFEREES ARE PEOPLE TOO! – Our Referees are not pros, they're people just like you, so please treat them with respect. Their interpretations of rules and their judgments on the field are final. Any aggressive behavior in their direction (or anyone else's direction) will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or expulsion from our leagues; let's avoid that.

#5. TEAM SIZE AND PLAYER ELIGIBILITY – All players must be at least 18 years old, and all players must sign a waiver to play. A full roster consists of at least 10 players; there is no roster maximum, but no players will be added to the roster after the 4th week. BLS reserves the right to add players to teams to ensure roster size balance. Players may only play on the team to which they are registered. Teams may play up to 5 players (4 and a goalie) at a time, at least 2 of which must be female). No team will be allowed to play with fewer than 3 players (one player must be a female). Teams may never play more than 3 male players at a time, and no team will be allowed to play without at least 1 female player. Teams with no female players or with fewer than three total players will be compelled to Forfeit. Teams must start the game at the scheduled game time if the minimum number of players is present on both teams.

#6. CAPTAINS – Each team shall have one or two Captains who are charged with making sure that only players registered on their team are participating on their team's behalf. Any team playing with an unregistered player is subject to forfeiting that game and expulsion from the league. Only captains may dispute calls on the field, and must remain cool throughout. Captains are responsible for their players understanding the rules. Captains must stay in contact with BLS and attend any required league meetings, communicating any changes in regards to scheduling or rules with his/her team. Captains are responsible for any trash left by his or her team after each session of play.

#7. THE FIELD AND OUT OF BOUNDS – All four walls of the gym are part of the field of play. The ball is considered out of bounds if it comes to rest on the bleachers or in a designated dead ball

zone. Dead ball zones are gym-specific and will be explained by the Field Manager. If a ball goes out of bounds, the opposing team receives a kick-in from the Touch Line. If the ball hits the ceiling while in play, gameplay will be restarted with an indirect kick taken by the opponents of the team that last touched the ball. The kick is taken from the point on the ground above which the ball hit the ceiling. If a player is pinned against the wall or bleachers, play is stopped and the team with the ball receives a kick-in from that spot.

#8. EQUIPMENT – The game ball will be provided by BLS for all matches. Shin guards are recommended for all players and are the responsibility of each individual player. They will not be provided by the league. All players must wear rubber-soled shoes. No cleats are allowed. Each player on an official team roster will receive a league-issued shirt on week 2 of the Season unless there is an unforeseen problem. Shirt sizes and ink colors are not guaranteed based on availability. You always need your Team T-Shirts. They are our only way of identifying you. The shirt must be worn and visible during each and every game of the Season. Any player wearing a non-Team T-Shirt deemed too confusing to the other team (ex: wrong color or wrong league) will not be allowed to play until they change their shirt. Team T-shirts are used by the employees of the sponsor Bar to identify BLS players, who are eligible to receive league discounts. While Shirt customization is allowed, teams/players may not use offensive language or designs that obscure/alter the BigLeagueSports logo when personalizing Shirts. Names, nicknames, numbers, and team logos are all welcome additions to the shirts. Please also feel free to bedazzle, tie-dye, or apply patches to them, if you are so inclined.

#9. INCLEMENT WEATHER – In the event of heavy rain or snow that results in the conditions of a game being unsafe or travel being unsafe, BigLeagueSports will notify all captains. In the event the games have been started and then have to be called off due to inclement weather while underway, the games will be restarted from the beginning if less than half of the game has been played and will be called or resumed from the stoppage of play if the game has reached the halftime mark. Any games postponed for weather will be rescheduled and information on the rescheduled game will be sent to all players by email.

#10. STANDINGS – Standings are ordered by Standings Points [calculated as $(2 * \text{Wins}) + \text{Ties} - \text{Forfeits}$]. The first tiebreaker is Head-to-Head performance among all tied teams, followed by points allowed, followed by points scored, followed by a coin flip.

#11. POSTSEASON PLAY – Playoff brackets may be divided into different levels of competition as determined by BigLeagueSports. While regular season games can end in a tie, postseason games tied after the second half will play a first-score-wins (sudden death) overtime period.

#12. FORFEITS – Games start as scheduled, so please be on time. We recommend showing up at least 15 minutes early to avoid any confusion and the chance of forfeiting. Please don't forfeit. Your teammates and opponents count on you to have a full team and a social game. Upon arrival, inform BLS Field Manager if you a) know that your team will be short players for your game or b) expect to field a full team, but are currently short players. BLS staff and head referee will help make sure that a game is played (official or scrimmage) on every field. A team

must have at least 3 players from the team roster including 1 woman to start a game. Game Time is Forfeit Time. There is no grace period. The penalty for a team's forfeit is a negative point in the standings, a team's second forfeit is a negative point in the standings and ineligibility for the playoffs, and a team's third forfeit is removal from the remaining schedule, as they will be considered to have abandoned their place in the league, forfeiting their registration fees. A BigLeagueSports staff member will contact teams in this category to confirm their status. However, there are no additional penalties beyond a negative point in the standings if you show up short-handed and have to forfeit the game, since you did make an effort to get a team to play. If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, please contact bigleaguesport@gmail.com. It is not considered notification unless you receive a reply. Once BigLeagueSports & Entertainment is notified you are forfeiting, it is official (you cannot change your mind), and the other team will be notified.

#13. EJECTED PARTICIPANTS – Any ejected individual must get approval by Maurice Reep, President of BIGLEAGUE SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT, prior to attending or participating in future games, leagues, or hosted events, including Post-Game Parties. Attempted participation without approval is subject to further penalties. Rulings may include, but are not limited to, probation, game/league suspension, or permanent expulsion.

GAME PLAY

#14. GAME LENGTH AND THE CLOCK - Games consist of two 20-minute halves with a continuous running game clock, separated by a 2-minute halftime. The Game Head Referee is the timekeeper. There will be no overtime during the regular season.

#15. START OF PLAY – The referee will have the two captains shoot rock/paper/scissors. The winning captain will have the option of choosing sides or taking the kick-off. A game is started by a kick-off from the center mark. The kick does not have to go forward. The opposition must be no closer than 3 yards from the ball when the kick-off begins. In the second half, teams change directions and possession. A goal cannot be scored on a direct kick from the kick-off.

#16. MID-GAME SUBSTITUTIONS – Both teams may substitute an unlimited number of players at anytime during play. The exiting player must be off the court prior to the Substitute entering the court. If the Referee stops the game for an injury, another player must replace the injured player until the injured player recovers.

#17. GOALKEEPER – The goalkeepers can only use their hands in the goal box, but may not touch the ball with their hands if a player on their own team has deliberately kicked it to them. Goalkeepers cannot dropkick or punt the ball. They can only roll the ball underhand or set it down and kick it. Once the ball is set down, it cannot be picked up again. If the ball is picked up again, the opposing team receives an indirect kick from the spot of the retouch. Goalkeeper throwing infractions result in kick-ins for the opposing team from the Touch Line (sideline) at mid-court.

#18. GOAL KICKS AND CORNER KICKS – Goal kicks occur when the ball lands on the net behind the goal after being touched last by the offensive team; at which point, play is stopped. Goal kicks are indirect kicks and are taken from anywhere inside the penalty area. Corner kicks occur when the ball lands on the net behind the goal after being touched last by the defensive team; at which point, play is stopped. Corner kicks are indirect.

#19. KICK-INS (NO THROW-INS) - Kick-ins are taken from the Touch Line. All kick-ins are indirect kicks. The ball will be placed on the line and players from the opposing team must be at least 5 feet away from the ball.

#20. HANDBALLS - Handballs are called at Ref's discretion. The handballs that affect the flow or outcome of a play will be called. Many inadvertent incidents of contact between the ball and arm/hand area will go uncalled. Players may protect vital body parts from the ball with their hands as long as such movements are reactive in nature and close to the body. If the handball is intentional or impacts the flow or outcome of a play, the opposing team will receive an indirect kick at the placement of the infraction.

#21. FREE KICKS AND FOULS - All free kicks are indirect with the exception of tripping, slide

tacking and intentional (defensive) handballs within the goal box. An indirect kick is one where a player from the team with possession of the ball must first pass it to a teammate before a shot on goal can be taken. An indirect kick shot on goal without another offensive player first touching the ball will result in a change of possession and an indirect kick for the opposing team at the spot of the foul. Free kicks resulting from fouls will occur at spot of the foul. Penalty kicks are only awarded for slide tacking, tripping and intentional handball offenses in the goal box. Penalty kicks are direct kicks and do not have to touch another player prior to a goal. Any member of the offended team may attempt a penalty kick provided that the member is the same gender as the player fouled and was on the court when the foul occurred. Penalty kicks will be taken from the basketball foul line. A free kick is awarded to the opposing team if player commits any of the following offenses in a manner considered by a Referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent
- Plays in a dangerous manner (high kicking, slide tackling, dangerous tackles from behind)
- Impedes the progress of an opponent
- Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hand

#22. END OF GAME – At the end of the game, the referee will call the captains from both teams together to confirm the final score of the game, sign next to their respective scores, shake hands, and confirm location of sponsor bar.