



SOCCER CAUTION AND EJECTION HELP GUIDE 2026 AND 2027 SEASONS

CAUTIONS (YELLOW CARD)

- Regular season accumulated cautions (Rule 12.5):
 - 5 cautions in one season = suspension from the next regularly scheduled game.
 - 3 additional cautions in one season (8 total) = suspension from the next regularly scheduled game.
 - Each 2 additional cautions (10 total, 12 total, etc.) = suspension from the next regularly scheduled game.
 - Suspensions carry over to postseason (conference tournament/NCAA tournament) and/or the next season if the team doesn't participate in postseason.
- Postseason accumulated cautions (Rule 12.6):
 - Regular season caution accumulation carries into postseason (conference tournament/NCAA tournament).
 - 8 cautions = suspension from the next regularly scheduled game. (NOTE: If a player enters postseason with 4 or fewer cautions, they are not required to serve a suspension until they reach their 8th caution).
 - Each 2 additional cautions (10 total, 12 total, etc.) = suspension from the next regularly scheduled game.
 - Suspensions carry over to the next season.
- NOTE: Cautions do **not** carry an immediate ejection even if a threshold listed above is met during the game. Players are permitted to continue playing for the entirety of that game. EXCEPTION: A second caution issued to a player in the same game results in a red card, which requires an immediate ejection.
- EXAMPLE: If a player enters the game with 4 cautions, they are NOT ejected from the game at the time they receive their 5th caution. However, they are required to serve a one game suspension in the next regularly scheduled game (this is applicable to situations involving an 8th caution, 10th caution, etc.).

EJECTIONS (RED CARD)

- All red card ejections = immediate ejection and at least a one game suspension. All suspensions must be served during the next regularly scheduled game(s).
- For Violent Behavior ejections (Rule 12.7.10), a committee consisting of the NCAA Secretary-Rules Editor, National Coordinator, and one of the NCAA Officiating Advisors shall classify the offense as Violent Behavior I, Violent Behavior II, Fighting, or Referee Assault. Once the committee has made its determination, the appropriate penalties for the given offense will apply. The committee's judgment is final and not subject to appeal.
- Two red card ejections in the same season for violent behavior II, fighting or referee assault (or any combination) will result in suspension for the remainder of the season. (Rule 12.8.4)
- Suspensions carry over to the next season.

EXAMPLES FOR REGULAR SEASON

SITUATION	PENALTY	EXPLANATION
A1 has accumulated 4 yellow cards and receives 1 red card.	Immediate ejection and 1-game suspension.	Suspended 1 game for the red card ejection.
A1 receives two yellow cards in the next game in which they participate, which equals 1 yellow card and 1 red card. Totals: 5 yellow cards and 2 red cards.	Immediate ejection and 2-game suspension.	Suspended 1 game for 5 th yellow card plus an additional one game for the red card ejection.
A1 receives 6 th , 7 th and 8 th yellow cards in each of the next 3 games. Totals: 8 yellow cards and 2 red cards.	1-game suspension after 8 th yellow card.	Suspended 1 game for accumulation of 8 th yellow card during the regular season.
After serving their suspension, A1 receives 1 fighting red card. Totals: 8 yellow cards and 3 red cards (1 fighting).	Immediate ejection and 2-game suspension.	Suspended two games for the fighting red card ejection.

SITUATION	PENALTY	EXPLANATION
B1 has accumulated 4 yellow cards and receives 2 yellow cards in the same game, which equals 1 yellow and 1 red. Totals: 5 yellow cards and 1 red card.	Immediate ejection and 2-game suspension.	Suspended 1 game for 5 th yellow card plus additional game for red card ejection.
After serving their suspension, B1 receives 6 th , 7 th and 8 th yellow cards in each of the next 3 games. Totals: 8 yellow cards and 1 red card.	1-game suspension after 8 th yellow card.	Suspended 1 game for accumulation of 8 th yellow card during the regular season.
After serving their suspension, B1 receives 1 fighting red card. Totals: 8 yellow cards and 2 red cards (1 fighting).	Immediate ejection and 2-game suspension.	Suspended 2 games for the fighting red card.

SITUATION	PENALTY	EXPLANATION
C1 receives a red card in an exhibition game.	Suspension is not mandatory.	Cards received during an exhibition game do not count against player's accumulation and do not qualify as games with reference to ejected players.
C1 receives a red card. Totals: 1 red card.	Immediate ejection and 1-game suspension.	Suspended 1 game for red card ejection.
C1 receives a fighting red card. Totals: 2 red cards (1 fighting).	Immediate ejection and 2-game suspension.	Suspended 2 games for fighting red card.

EXAMPLE FOR POSTSEASON

SITUATION	PENALTY	EXPLANATION
D1 has accumulated 4 yellow cards and 1 red card during the regular season and has served the 1-game suspension before the postseason.	D1 served the 1-game suspension for the red card.	D1 is free to play in the first game of the postseason.
D1 receives a caution in the 1st postseason game. Totals: 5 yellow cards and 1 red card.	No penalty.	The card accumulation threshold increases to 8 yellow cards in the postseason.
D1 receives 6th, 7th and 8th yellow cards in each of the next 3 games. Totals: 8 yellow cards and 1 red card.	1-game suspension after 8th yellow card.	The card accumulation threshold increases to 8 yellow cards in the postseason.