
RULE 1

The Field of Play

1.1 Dimensions

1.1.1 The field of play shall be rectangular, with a length of 115-120 yards and a width of 70-75 yards.

1.1.1.1 Facilities used as a college soccer field before 1995 need only to be rectangular, the width of which shall not exceed the length. Resurfacing the playing field does not change this exemption.

Note 1: The optimum size is 75 by 120 yards.

Note 2: It is the responsibility of the home team to notify the visiting team, before the date of the game, of any changes in the field dimensions (for example, greater or less than recommended dimensions), playing surface (for example, from grass to artificial or vice versa) or location of the playing site.

Note 3: A team is not required to play on a field that is not in compliance with the rules. However, the teams can agree to play the game by mutual consent.

It is recommended that teams agree on any changes in facility issues before confirming contests or signing game contracts.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.1.2 Indoor Facility. It is permissible to conduct collegiate soccer games in an indoor facility provided the dimensions are in compliance with Rule 1.1.1. Balls striking any part of the upper edifice shall result in one of the two following actions:

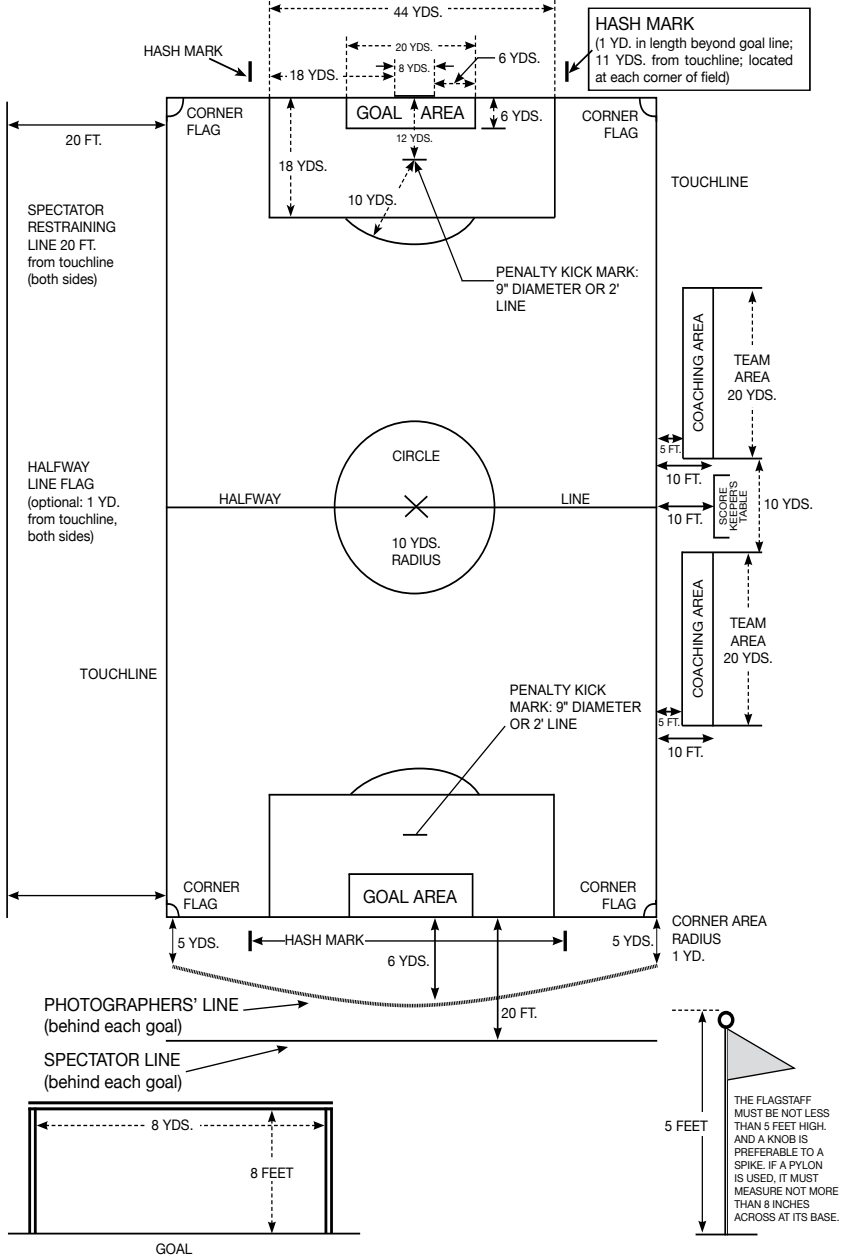
- 1) If the ball lands “in touch” (out of bounds), the opposing team shall be awarded a throw-in from the nearest point where the ball crossed the touchline.
- 2) If the ball makes contact with any part of the overhead edifice, the referee’s whistle shall indicate a dead ball and the suspension of play. Play shall be restarted with a drop ball at a point nearest where the ball made contact in the field of play.

Exception: *If the ball falls inside the penalty area, play shall be restarted by dropping the ball for the goalkeeper.*

Note: Corner kicks and goal kicks shall be awarded accordingly. (See Rules 9.3.1 and 9.3.2.)

PLAN OF FIELD

Note: For marking purposes, the measurement of any line interfacing with any other line must be taken from the outside of the line to the outside of the other line.



1.2 Boundary Lines

The field shall be marked with distinctive lines, in accordance with the Plan of Field diagram on Page 9, the longer boundary lines being called the touchlines and the shorter the end lines. The end lines shall meet at the corners and shall extend from touchline to touchline. The goal lines shall be that part of the end line that extends completely across the area between the goal posts. The touchlines shall extend the entire length of the field.

The home team is responsible for proper marking of the field.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.3 Field Markings and Measurements

- 1.3.1 All lines, which are part of the areas they define, shall be the same width and measure not less than 4 inches nor more than 5 inches in width.
- 1.3.2 Measurements shall be taken from the outside of the line to the outside of the line with which it interfaces. However, when measuring the width of the goal and penalty areas, the measurements shall be taken from the inside of the goal post to the outside of the 6- and 18-yard lines, respectively.
- 1.3.3 In the case of a field that is playable but on which, during the course of the game, the lines and markings have become invisible due to snow or other such conditions, the lines and markings shall be assumed to be present and decisions rendered accordingly.
- 1.3.4 All lines shall be clearly marked but may not be of a form (for example, grooves, curbs or other items) that could prove dangerous to players.
- 1.3.5 NCAA, team or conference logos, names or abbreviations, and non-commercial logos (e.g., players' names or numbers for senior day) are permitted on the field provided they are not in the penalty area and do not obscure any required field markings.
- 1.3.6 Two commercial logos (one in each half of the field), not larger than 15-foot-by-15-foot square, are permitted on the field provided they are not in the penalty area and do not obscure any required field markings.

1.4 Halfway Line, Center Circle

A halfway line shall be visibly marked across the entire field of play. The center of the field shall be indicated by a suitable mark, and a circle with a 10-yard radius shall be marked around it.

Note: Beginning in 2016, any new field construction or renovation must be compliant.

1.5 Goal Area

At each end of the field of play, two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the end line, 6 yards from the inside of each goal post. These shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 6 yards and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area enclosed by these lines shall be called a goal area.

PENALTY—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.6 Penalty Area

- 1.6.1 At each end of the field of play, two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the end line, 18 yards from the inside of each goal post. These lines shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 18 yards and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. Each of the spaces enclosed by these lines shall be called the penalty area.
- 1.6.2 At each end of the field, a 2-foot line or 9-inch spot shall be placed at a point 12 yards from the midpoint of, and parallel to, the goal line. The line shall extend 1 foot on either side of the undrawn center line. The spot shall extend 4½ inches on either side of the undrawn center line. The penalty kick may be taken from any position on this line or spot.
- 1.6.3 Using the center of this penalty-kick mark, describe a 10-yard arc outside the penalty area and closing on the penalty-area line. This is the restraining line for penalty kicks.

PENALTY—(1.6.1 to 1.6.3)—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.7 Corner Area, Hash Mark

From each corner, a quarter circle, having a radius of 1 yard, shall be drawn inside the field of play. In addition, a hash mark 1 yard in length, situated 6 inches beyond (but not touching) the field of play and 11 yards from the touchline shall be marked perpendicular to the end line at each corner of the field. (See Plan of Field, Page 9.)

PENALTY—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.8 Corner Flags

- 1.8.1 A flag on a post not less than 5 feet high and having a nonpointed top shall be placed at each corner; a similar flag post may be placed opposite the halfway line on each side of the field of play, at least 1 yard outside the touchline.
- 1.8.2 The post shall be approximately 1½ inches in diameter. The corner flag shall not be removed for any purpose during the game. The flag shall be of some bright color, easily distinguishable from the surroundings, and shall be about 2 feet long by 1 foot wide and securely fastened to the post or staff.
- 1.8.3 The flag post shall be implanted in the ground or shall rise from a pylon that measures not more than 8 inches across at its base, providing the post itself rises directly above the center of the intersection of the touchline and end line.
- 1.8.4 It is permissible to have the institution, conference or NCAA name or logo on corner flags.

PENALTY—(1.8.1 to 1.8.4)—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.9 Goals

1.9.1 The goals shall be anchored, secured or counterweighted. The goal posts, which shall be superimposed on end lines of the same width and depth, shall consist of two posts, equidistant from the corner flags and 8 yards apart (inside measurement), joined by a horizontal crossbar of similar material, the lower edge of which shall be 8 feet from the ground.

PENALTY—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.9.2 The width or diameter of the goal posts and crossbar shall not be less than 4 inches nor more than 5 inches, and the same as the width of the goal line.

1.9.3 The back edge of the goal post must align with the outermost edge of the end line.

1.9.4 The posts and crossbar may be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape, and shall be painted white.

1.9.5 No markings other than a single manufacturer's identification/logo of appropriate size may appear on the goal posts or the crossbar.

PENALTY—(1.9.2 to 1.9.5)—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.10 Goal Nets

1.10.1 Nets shall be attached to the uprights and crossbars and secured behind each goal.

1.10.2 The goal nets shall be properly and firmly secured and put in order before every game, and care taken that there are no holes or possible openings for the ball to escape. The nets shall be properly supported so that the top of the net will extend backward on a level with the crossbar for a distance of about 2 feet.

1.10.3 Nets may be multicolored and include the institution, conference or NCAA name or logo. Additionally, a single manufacturer's identification/logo of appropriate size may appear on the net. Further, banners shall not be hung from the goals or nets.

PENALTY—(1.10.1 to 1.10.3)—If it cannot be corrected before the start of competition, the game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.11 Displaced Crossbar, Goal Post

If any part of the goal becomes displaced during the game, play shall be suspended, and every effort shall be made to repair or replace the goal. If, in the referee's opinion, it cannot be repaired to its original condition within a reasonable period of time, the game shall be suspended. When the goal is repaired or replaced, the referee shall restart the game by dropping the ball where it was when play was suspended; or, if the ball was in the penalty area, it shall be dropped for the goalkeeper.

1.12 Coaching and Team Areas

1.12.1 There shall be a coaching and team area. Team benches shall be on the same side of the field, separated by a 10-yard neutral zone, and shall be at least 10 feet (whenever possible) from the touchline.

1.12.2 Each coaching and team area shall be marked parallel to the touchline and situated at least 5 feet from the touchline and extending 20 yards from the five-yard neutral zone measured from the halfway line in both directions.

PENALTY—(1.12.1 to 1.12.2)—The game shall begin but the coach shall be reminded that in the future, proper markings are to be provided, and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.12.3 Coaches, players and bench personnel shall remain inside their respective coaching and team areas. **Exceptions:** (1) *Players warming up in preparation to enter the field of play are permitted to use the area that extends beyond the respective area nearest their bench and opposite their opponent's areas. (See Rule 4.1.16.)* (2) *Athletic trainers and coaches may enter the field only if instructed to do so by the referee; however, it is not permissible to provide coaching instruction to any player(s) while attending an injured player(s).* (3) *A member of the coaching staff who is listed on the game roster is permitted to view the game from the press box or other suitable areas.*

PENALTY—Caution or eject as appropriate and restart play by an indirect free kick from the location of the ball (if in play) at the time of the infraction. Exception: Nearest point outside goal area if ball was in goal area when infraction occurred.

1.12.4 Members of the official coaching staff who are eligible to participate are permitted to communicate with each other via electronic devices. As per Rules 12.7.4.1 to 12.7.4.10 PENALTY and Rule 12.8.3, coaches ejected or serving a game suspension are not permitted to communicate with each other.

A.R. 1.12.4.a. May a coach use an electronic communication device, tablet, dry erase board or similar coaching aid during the game? **RULING:** Yes.

A.R. 1.12.4.b. May a coach use an electronic communication device to question a referee's call? **RULING:** No.

A.R. 1.12.4.c. May drones be used during a game? **RULING:** No.

1.12.5 Coaching from the touchlines is restricted to communication with one's own team and staff, and is confined to the coaching and team areas. **Exception:** *See Rule 1.12.3 Exception (3).*

1.12.6 No person(s) other than the players are allowed on the field of play without permission from the referee. Athletic trainers and coaches may enter the field only if instructed to do so by the referee.

1.12.7 No coach, player or team representative other than the team captain shall approach or speak to the center referee during an interval between periods, unless summoned by the center referee.

Note: This does not prohibit the coach from approaching an assistant referee or the fourth official on the sideline in a sporting and timely manner.

PENALTY—(1.12.5 to 1.12.7)—Warn, caution or eject as appropriate.

1.13 Photographers' Line

There shall be a designated photographers' area. (See Plan of Field, Page 9.)

1.14 Scorekeeper's/Timekeeper's Table

If not using a press box for timekeeping, the scorekeeper's/timekeeper's table shall be placed on the same side of the field as the team benches, situated equidistant between the two team benches and at least 10 feet (whenever possible) from the touchlines.

1.15 Spectator Restraining Line

It is recommended that a rope, fence or some form of demarcation be used to keep spectators a minimum of 20 feet (whenever possible) away from the touch and end lines.

1.16 Scoreboard and Clock

It is recommended that an electronically controlled clock and scoreboard, which can be seen by spectators and both benches, be provided and maintained in proper working order. (See Rule 6.3.1.)

1.17 Lighting

The field should be uniformly and adequately lighted. Lighting engineers shall be placed in charge of this important factor when planning new installations. Please consult the latest version of the NCAA Broadcasting Manual at ncaa.org for specific lighting standards.

1.18 Grading, Slope of Field

- 1.18.1 The rules of conduct in the NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules do not specify, nor do they legislate, matters pertaining to the areas surrounding the field of play, or the slope or grading of playing facilities.
- 1.18.2 The following guidelines appear to be generally accepted standards for new facilities: A field with not greater than a 2% slope at the declining edges of the touchlines, provided that the outer lines of demarcation do not abut with hazardous curbing or boundary materials, is considered preferable. Architectural engineers shall be consulted with reference to the actual height references that pertain to grading percentages or broken-back construction.