



Special Olympics

FOOTBALL COACHING GUIDE

Football Rules, Protocol & Etiquette



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Teaching the Rules of Football

The best time to teach the rules of football is during practice. Please refer to the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules Book for the complete listing of football rules. The International Federation of Football Association's (FIFA) Fair Play Philosophy is advocated throughout the football world. The following guidelines are taken from FIFA's Laws of the Game and Universal Guide for Referees. As coach, it is your responsibility to know and understand the rules of the game. It is equally important to teach your players the rules and to make them play within the spirit of the game. Below are selected laws of the 17 laws that govern the game of football. Maintain current copies of the Special Olympics Sports Rules and your national and international federation football rulebooks. Know the differences and carry them to every game.

Law V - Referees

The referee is responsible for the entire game, including keeping a record of the game and acting as the timekeeper. The referee makes decisions on penalties, cautions and ejects players for misconduct. The referee may also end the game due to inclement weather, spectator interference, etc. Referee determines injury time outs and other time stoppages. All decisions by the referee are final.

Law VI - Linesmen

Two linesmen are primarily responsible for indicating to the referee when the ball is out of play and which team is entitled to a throw-in, goal kick or corner kick.

Law VIII - The Start of Play

At the beginning of each half and after a goal is scored, a kickoff starts play. The ball is placed on the center spot inside the center circle. The ball must be kicked forward and roll the distance of its circumference before it is officially in play.

All players must remain on their half of the field, and the opposition must be outside of the center circle until the ball is in play. The player kicking the ball may not play the ball again until it is touched by another player. A goal may not be scored directly from a kickoff. A player other than the kicker must touch the ball before a goal can be scored.

A coin toss at the beginning of the game determines which team decides between taking the kickoff or defending a chosen side first. The team that does not take the kickoff at the beginning of the game takes the second half kickoff. A team that is scored upon is awarded a kickoff to restart the game.



Law IX - Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the end line, goal line or touchline and the referee has stopped play. The ball is in play at all other times even if it hits the goalposts, crossbar or referee, as long as it is still on the field of play.

Law X - Method of Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar. A goal cannot be thrown, carried or propelled by the hand or arm of a player on the opposing team.

Law XI - Offside

A player is offside when he or she is in the opponent's half of the field and nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball, unless at least two opponents, including the goalkeeper, are nearer to the goal line than the attacking player or if the opponent receives the ball directly from a throw-in, corner kick or goal kick. Although a player may be in an offside position, a penalty is called only if the referee believes that the player is interfering with play or gaining advantage.

Law XIII - Free Kick

Direct and indirect kicks are the two types of free kicks awarded during a game. A goal can be scored directly from a direct kick. For indirect kicks, the ball must be touched by a player other than the kicker before a goal can be scored. All defending players must stay at least 10 yards from the ball on all free kicks. The ball is in play once it has traveled the distance of its circumference. The kicker may not play the ball a second time until another player has touched it

Law XIV - Penalty Kick

If any of the nine major fouls are committed by the defending team in its own penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team. The ball is placed on the penalty spot 12 yards from the goal. When the kick is taken, the goalkeeper must stand on the goal line between the goalposts. The goalkeeper may not move his or her feet until the ball has been struck. The only players allowed inside the penalty area at the time of the kick are the goalkeeper and the player taking the kick. All other players must remain outside the penalty area, at least 10 yards from the ball, until the ball is in play.

Law XV - Throw-In

When a player plays the entire ball over one of the two touchlines, a throw-in is awarded to the opposing team at the place where the whole of the ball crosses the line. The player throwing the ball must face the field and deliver the ball using two hands placed behind and over the head. At the moment of release, both of the thrower's feet must be on the ground and on or behind the touchline.

Law XXI - Goal Kick

A goal kick is awarded to the defending team when the whole of the ball crosses the end line and was last touched by an opposing player. The defending team must place the ball inside the goal area. The ball must be kicked beyond the penalty area before it can be touched by another player. If the ball is touched by a player before it travels outside of the penalty area, the goal kick is retaken. Players from the opposing team must remain outside of the penalty area while the kick is being taken. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player. A goal may not be scored directly from a goal kick.



Law XVII - Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded to the attacking team when any member of the defending team plays the ball over the end line. A kick is taken from the quarter circle, with a radius of 1 yard, which is marked in each of the four corners of the field. The ball must be placed within the quarter circle at the defending side's end line nearest to where the ball went out of play. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick. All defenders must remain 10 yards from the ball until it has traveled the distance of its circumference.

The Nine Major Fouls

There are nine major offenses, or fouls, which result in either a direct free kick or a penalty kick, depending on the location of the offense.

1. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent.
2. Tripping an opponent; i.e., throwing or attempting to throw an opponent with the legs or by undercutting an opponent with the body.
3. Jumping at an opponent in a way that endangers the player.
4. Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner.
5. Charging an opponent from behind unless the latter is obstructing.
6. Striking, attempting to strike or spitting at an opponent.
7. Holding an opponent.
8. Pushing an opponent.
9. Directing or stopping the ball by using the hands or arms. This rule does not apply to the goalkeeper within the penalty area.

Unified Sports Rules

There are few differences between the rules for Unified Sports competition and the rules as stipulated in the official Special Olympics Sports Rules and modifications outlined in the rules book. The additions are highlighted below.

1. For both 5-a-side and 11-a-side football, similar age and ability levels are required of both athletes and partners.
2. A lineup during the competition consists of three athletes and two partners for 5-a-side, and six athletes and five partners for 11-a-side football.
3. Teams are divisioned for competition based primarily on ability. In football, division assignment is based on the best players on the roster, not the average ability of all players.
4. Team sports must have an adult, nonplaying coach. Player-coaches are not allowed in team sports.

The election of athletes and partners of similar age and ability is essential, for Unified Sports football training and competition. Though rules modifications have been implemented to minimize differences between athletes and partners, inappropriate competition experiences and a higher risk of injury result from teams where athletes and partners are poorly matched.

Protest Procedures

Protest procedures are governed by the rules of competition. The role of the competition management team is to enforce the rules. As coach, your duty to your athletes and team is to protest any action or events while your athlete is competing that you think violate Official Football Rules. It is extremely important that you do not make protests because you and your athlete did not get your desired outcome of an event. Making protests are serious matters that impact a competition's schedule. Check with the competition management team prior to competition to learn the protest procedures for that competition.



Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is both the coach and athletes commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below, we highlight a few key points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

Competitive Effort

- Put forth maximum effort during each event.
- Practice skills with the same intensity as you would perform them in competition.
- Always finish a race or event - never quit.

Fair Play at All Times

- Always comply with the rules.
- Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- Respect the decision of the officials at all times.

Expectations of Coaches

1. Always set a good example for participants and fans to follow.
2. Instruct participants in proper sportsmanship responsibilities, and demand that they make sportsmanship and ethics the top priorities.
3. Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the event and display no behavior that could incite fans.
4. Treat opposing coaches, directors, participants and fans with respect.
5. Shake hands with officials and the opposing coach in public.
6. Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

Expectations of Athletes & Partners in Unified Sports

1. Treat teammates with respect.
2. Encourage teammates when they make a mistake.
3. Treat opponents with respect: shake hands prior to and after contests.
4. Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the contest and display no behavior that could incite fans.
5. Cooperate with officials, coaches or directors and fellow participants to conduct a fair contest.
6. Do not retaliate (verbally or physically) if the other team demonstrates poor behavior.
7. Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.
8. Define winning as doing your personal best.
9. Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.

Coaching Tips

- Discuss football etiquette, such as congratulating opponent after all events? win or lose; control temper and behaviour at all times.
- Give sportsmanship awards or recognition after each game or practice.
- Always commend the athletes when they demonstrate sportsmanship.



Remember ...

- ♦ Sportsmanship is an attitude that is shown by the way you and your athletes act on and off the field of play.
- ♦ Be positive about competing.
- ♦ Respect your opponents and yourself.
- ♦ Always stay under control, even if you are feeling mad or angry.



Football Glossary

Term	Definition
Advantage	A special rule that allows play to continue after a foul if it would be disadvantageous to the team that was fouled.
Center Mark	The circle in the middle of the field. It should be 10 yards in diameter.
Clearance	When a player kicks the ball out front of their own goal area.
Control	What a player tries to achieve when the ball comes to them.
Corner Kick	When the defending team kicks the ball over their own end line, the opposing team restarts the game.
Direct Free Kick	A free kick resulting from a foul that can be shot into the goal without having to be touched by another player.
Dribbling	A player who is running with the ball.
Field or Pitch	Football playing field.
Free Kick	How a game is restarted when a player is fouled.
Give-and-Go	A play in which a player who is faced by an opponent passes the ball to a teammate, runs around the opponent and receives the return pass.
Goal Area	The rectangular area, 20 yards wide by 6 yards deep, in front of each goal from which all goal kicks are taken; inside this area, it is illegal for opposing players to charge a goalkeeper not holding the ball.
Goal Kick	A free kick awarded the goalie if the offense was the last to contact the ball before passing over the goal line.
Goal line	The line on the playing field over which the ball must pass to score a goal.
Goals	What teams score.
Halves	Game is divided into two, timed halves.
Indirect Free Kick	A free kick resulting from a foul that cannot be shot directly into the goal. If the ball enters the goal without touching another player, the goal is void.
Injury Time	Additional time added to the end of each half to compensate for the stoppage of play due to injuries, wasted time or the scoring of a goal.
Kickoff	How a game is started.
Offside	An infraction of the rules in which an offensive player does not have at least two defensemen (including the goalie) between them and the goal line when the ball is played forward by a member of the offensive team.
Penalty Area	The area marked out in front of the goal within which the goalkeeper can use their hands.
Penalty Area	The area marked out in front of the goal within which the goalkeeper can use their hands. The area begins and ends 18 yards to each side of the goal (from the inside of the goal post) and extends 18 yards into the field.



Term	Definition
Penalty Kick	A direct free kick awarded for a foul occurring in the penalty area. The ball is placed 12 yards away from the front of the goal. Only the goalie and fouled player may be in the penalty area during the kick, but any player may play the ball once touched by the goalie.
Penalty Mark	A 'dot' on the field that is 12 yards in front of the goal, equidistant to each goal post, or in other words, centered.
Screening	Also called Shielding. A technique where a controlling player keeps their body between the ball and a marking opponent.
Shin Pads	Pads that protect the shins of a player.
Sweeper	A defender that roams the defensive zone between the fullbacks and the goalie.
Tackle	To take the ball away from a dribbler using the feet.
Through Pass	A passed ball that splits a pair of defenders.
Throw-In	A technique to return the ball to play when it leaves the field over the touchlines. The player must have both hands on the ball and throw over his head while keeping both feet on the ground.
Trap or Trapping	To receive the ball in a controlled manner with any part of the body (except hands or arms). Usually trapped with the foot, thigh or chest.
Volley	Kicking the ball in or out of mid air.
Wall	A group of defenders standing shoulder-to-shoulder in attempt to defend a free kick near the goal.