

MSHSL Modified Soccer Rules

Rule 1 – The Field

Goals

- a. If used on a football field, the front of portable goals should be at least 2 yards in front of the base of the football goalposts.
- b. The vertical portion of goal posts may be padded with commercially manufactured material. Pads shall be white, have a maximum thickness of one inch, be a minimum of 72 inches high, and be properly secured.
- c. Nets shall be attached to the goals.

Official and Team Areas

- a. Team bench areas shall be marked, separated by an official area for entering substitutes, scorers, and timers. These marked areas shall be at least 10 feet from the touchline. Officials should notify MSHSL if team areas are not marked.

Spectator Areas

- a. Spectators shall be confined to areas at least 10 feet from the touchline.

Field and Weather Conditions

- a. Prior to the start of a contest, the host school is responsible for determining whether conditions present a threat to the safety of participants and spectators and for determining whether the contest will begin. Once a contest begins, the officials have the authority to postpone or suspend play due to unsafe weather conditions. That decision may not be overruled. School officials also have this authority. The Superintendent or his/her designee may overrule an official and suspend or postpone a contest once it has begun. In other words, once a contest begins, *either* the officials or school authorities may postpone or suspend a contest and cannot be overruled by the other party. When in doubt, err on the side of safety.
- b. See MSHSL's *Manual for Athletic Officials* for:
 - The League's competition index for heat and cold.
 - The League's policy regarding lightning and threatening weather.

Rule 2 – The Ball

It is the responsibility of the home team to provide three or more official game balls of similar quality.

If the home team cannot provide three balls, the referee shall choose game balls from those offered by both teams.

Rule 3 – The Players

Team Captains

- a. The captain is the team's representative and may address an official on matters of interpretation and to obtain essential information.

Rosters

- a. Each team shall submit a roster, containing the first and last names and numbers of all players and substitutes and first and last names of all coaches and other bench personnel, to the officials at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the contest. The game shall not begin until this is complete. MSHSL does not require that teams use a specific roster form. Printed programs and rosters posted at the MSHSL website suffice to meet this requirement.
- b. Coaches may add players to the roster after the start of play.

Substitutions

- a. Either team may substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench between periods.
- b. Either team may substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench, provided that they report to the scorer's table or nearest official and are beckoned in:
 - after a goal;
 - when a player is injured and removed from the field.
- c. Teams may substitute an unlimited number of players provided that they have checked in and are waiting at the halfway line:
 - prior to a goal kick (either team);
 - prior to a throw-in (team with possession; if they sub, opposing team also may sub);
 - prior to a corner kick (team with possession; if they sub, opposing team also may sub);
 - when a player is required to leave the field because of communicable disease concerns;
 - when the referee stops play to caution or disqualify a player or bench personnel (either team).
- d. If the referee stops the clock for an apparent injury to a field player or goalkeeper, the field player or goalkeeper must leave the field. The field player may be replaced, and the goalkeeper shall be replaced by either a substitute or a field player.
- e. A cautioned player shall leave the field but may be replaced from the bench. The cautioned player may not re-enter the game until the next legal substitution opportunity for his/her team. If the team elects to play shorthanded, the cautioned player may not be replaced until the next legal substitution opportunity for that team.
- f. A player disqualified during an interval between periods may be replaced.
- g. Teams may substitute only for injured, cautioned, or disqualified players during a penalty kick stoppage. A substitute who replaces an injured, cautioned, or disqualified player during a penalty kick stoppage shall not take the penalty kick.

Procedure for Substitution

- a. A substitute shall report to the scorer or, in the absence of a scorer, to the nearest official, and remain at the halfway line until an official beckons him/her to enter the field of play.
- b. A substitute becomes a player when he/she is beckoned onto the field of play, at which time the replaced individual is no longer a player.
- c. The goalkeeper may change places with a player on the field whenever the clock is stopped or a substitution opportunity occurs, provided the uniforms are legal. Any time the goalkeeper is changed, a referee shall be notified. Penalty for unauthorized goalkeeper change: warning for both players.

Excessive Substitutions

- a. When a team repeatedly substitutes to consume time, the referee shall order the timer to stop the clock during such substitutions and shall notify the coach of the offending team. Repetition may be construed as unsporting conduct.

Rule 4 - Players' Equipment

Uniforms

- a. The home team shall wear dark jerseys and socks (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white), and the visiting team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks. In the event of a similarity of color, the home team shall be responsible for making the necessary change.
- b. Both socks shall be the same color, with the home team wearing socks of a single dominant color, but not necessarily the color of the jersey, and the visiting team wearing solid white socks.
- c. The socks of the goalkeeper need not be the same color as those of his/her teammates, but shall differ in color from those of the opposing players.
- d. Teammates, including goalkeepers, must wear unique numbers at least 6 inches high on the backs of their jerseys and matching numbers at least 4 inches high on the fronts of their jerseys or shorts.
- e. Only names, patches, emblems or logos that reference the school are permitted on the team uniform. *Exceptions:* one manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference on each item, and/or an American flag and/or either a commemorative or memorial patch on the jersey.
- f. If visible apparel is worn under the jersey and/or shorts, it shall be a solid color: black, white, or matching the predominant color of the respective garment. All visible apparel worn must be alike in color among teammates, with the exception of the goalkeeper. Items worn under the jersey do not have to be the same color as items worn under the shorts.
- g. Visible arm compression sleeves shall be of a similar length, all alike, and shall be black, white, or of a solid color matching the predominant color of the jersey. Visible leg compression sleeves shall be of a similar length, all alike, and shall be black, white, or of a solid color matching the predominant color of the shorts.

Equipment

- a. Shinguards shall provide adequate and reasonable protection, be professionally manufactured, age- and size-appropriate, not altered to decrease protection, worn under the stockings, and worn with the bottom edge no higher than 2 inches above the ankle. Shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards at the time of manufacture. The NOCSAE seal and height range shall be permanently marked on the front of the shinguard.
- b. Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder must be covered and padded with closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½ inch thick.
- c. Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding.
- d. The use of soft-padded soccer headgear is permitted but not required. Goalkeepers may wear head protectors made of closed-cell, slow-recovery rubber or similar material.
- e. A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release signed by an appropriate health-care professional must be available at the game site.
- f. Goalkeepers may wear soft-billed hats or visors. If worn in conjunction with a head protector, it is to be worn outside and may not be attached to the head protector.
- g. Players may wear soft and yielding caps during inclement weather. Caps must be alike in color.
- h. MSHSL may on an individual basis permit players to participate while wearing head coverings for medical or cosmetic reasons or for religious reasons. Coverings or wraps shall not be abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other player and shall be attached in such a way that they are highly unlikely to come off during play.
- i. Hair control devices may be worn if made of soft material and not for adornment. Prohibited items include bandanas and sweatbands with players' names and/or numbers.
- j. A religious medal or string must be taped to the body.
- k. Players may not wear spectacle guards.
- l. Other uniform or equipment items not covered by NFHS or MSHSL rules require prior written approval from the League office, on MSHSL letterhead, signed by League staff, and presented to the referee prior to the start of the game.

Inspecting Players' Equipment

- a. Officials casually observe players during warm-up activities and note any illegal or improper equipment. During the pregame conference, the referee asks each head coach if his/her players will be properly and legally equipped at the kickoff.

Coaches' Responsibilities

- a. The head coach shall receive the first caution for an illegally equipped player, who must leave the field and may be replaced.
- b. All subsequent cautions for illegally equipped players shall be issued directly to the players and not to the head coach.

Rule 5 – The Officials

Certification

- a. Varsity matches: All officials must be certified by MSHSL. Games count only if at least two certified referees officiate. *Exception:* if only one certified referee is available, he or she must be willing to work alone, the coaches of both teams must agree to the arrangement, and the coaches must notify the MSHSL office before the start of the match. Club lines are permitted in such cases.
- b. Subvarsity matches: officials do not have to be certified by MSHSL.

Officiating Systems

- a. Varsity matches: officials shall use the diagonal system or the dual system.
- b. Subvarsity matches: officials may use the diagonal system, dual system, or single referee system.

Officials' Jurisdiction

- a. The jurisdiction of the officials shall begin on their arrival at the field of play and its immediate surroundings, which shall be no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the game, and end when they leave the field of play and its immediate surroundings.
- b. MSHSL recommends that officials arrive 20-30 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- c. The "immediate surroundings" include the parking lot.

Officials' Uniforms

- a. The officials shall be dressed alike in uniforms consisting of:
 - yellow jersey (MSHSL's preferred back-up color is black);
 - black shorts;
 - black stockings with horizontal white stripes;
 - predominantly black shoes;
 - solid black cap, if worn.

Officials' Equipment

- a. Crew members may use electronic communication devices including buzzer/beeper flags and headsets.

Incident Reports

- a. Reports are not required after routine games.
- b. Referees must use MSHSL's online form to report problems with facilities and equipment, serious injuries, ejections, and other significant incidents.

Rule 6 – Ball Holders, Timer and Scorer

Varsity games shall not begin without at least two ball holders.

The home school timer shall be the official timer and shall use a visible timing device. The referee shall instruct the timer to correct the clock when necessary. The referee shall keep the official time when no other means are available.

The home school shall designate the official scorer. The referee shall keep score when no other means are available.

Rule 7 – The Duration of the Game

Timing

- a. Varsity matches shall consist of two equal halves of 40 minutes. Subvarsity matches may be shorter.
- b. The halftime interval is 10 minutes unless otherwise agreed by opposing coaches.
- c. The referee shall keep the official time when no other means are available.
- d. The clock counts down. The clock shall be stopped for injuries, penalty kicks, cautions, disqualifications, following the scoring of goals, and when a referee orders the clock to be stopped. The clock shall be restarted when the ball is properly put into play.
- e. The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the second period only.

Official Game

- a. The referee shall declare an official game if one complete half or more has been played.

Tie-Breaker Procedures

- a. Regular season: If a game is tied after regulation time, the teams shall play two complete 5-minute overtime periods – no sudden victory. If the game remains tied after ten minutes of overtime, it ends in a tie.
- b. Postseason: If a section or state tournament game is tied after regulation time, the teams shall play one 20-minute sudden victory overtime period. If neither team scores during the first ten minutes, the referee stops play and teams exchange ends and play resumes immediately. There is no interval; teams do not go to their benches.
- c. Postseason: If a section or state tournament game remains tied after twenty minutes of overtime, teams proceed to kicks from the penalty mark. Players on or off the field (except any who were disqualified) are eligible to participate in the kicks.

Rule 8 – The Start of Play

No NFHS or MSHSL modifications.

Rule 9 – Ball In and Out of Play

Use of Whistle

- a. The referee shall sound the whistle when needed to indicate that the ball is out of play or for a foul. As soon as the ball is in position to be played, it may be played without a second whistle. *Exceptions:* A second whistle is required to restart play:
 - after a substitution;
 - after a caution or disqualification;
 - after an injury;
 - after setting a wall prior to a free kick;
 - for the taking of a penalty kick.

Restart After Temporary Suspension

- a. The referee shall restart play with a drop ball:
 - when the ball is caused to go out-of-bounds by two opponents simultaneously;
 - when the ball becomes deflated;
 - following a temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and *a goalkeeper is not in possession of the ball*;
 - when simultaneous fouls of the same degree occur by opponents;
 - when the ball touches an official as per 9-1-1b.
- b. The referee drops the ball from waist level to the ground. The referee drops the ball to one player of the team that last possessed the ball at the position where it was last touched by a player(s), an outside agent or match official. If when play was stopped, the ball was in the penalty area or the last touch, by either team, was in the penalty area, the ball is dropped to the defending team's goalkeeper with all opposing players outside the penalty area. In all cases, all other players must remain at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play. If a dropped ball enters the goal without touching at least two players, play is restarted with a goal kick if it enters the opponents' goal or a corner kick if it enters the team's own goal.

Rule 10 – Method of Scoring

A goal may be scored directly from a:

- a. Kick-off
- b. Goal kick
- c. Corner kick
- d. Goalkeeper throw, punt, or drop-kick
- e. Direct free kick
- f. Penalty kick

A goal may not be scored directly from a:

- a. Kick-off into a team's own goal
- b. Throw-in
- c. Goal kick into a team's own goal
- d. Corner kick into a team's own goal
- e. Direct free kick into a team's own goal.
- f. Dropped ball

Rule 11 – Offside

No NFHS or MSHSL modifications.

Rule 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Dangerous Play

- a. Dangerous play includes actions that endanger opponents, self, or teammates.

Misconduct

- a. The referee does not caution a player who engages in trickery to circumvent restrictions on handling by the goalkeeper. Punishment is limited to an Indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- b. The punishment for taunting is disqualification (red card).
- c. A player shall be cautioned (yellow card) for committing a foul while attempting to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the goal is scored.

- d. A player shall be disqualified (red card) for committing a foul while attempting to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the goal is not scored.
- e. The referee must notify the coaches of both teams, the scorer, and the other officials of the reasons for cautions and disqualifications.
- f. The referee cautions and shows yellow cards and/or disqualifies and shows red cards to coaches and other bench personnel who are guilty of misconduct.
- g. The referee may caution or disqualify a coach for team misconduct or for bench misconduct that cannot be attributed to a specific individual.
- h. The referee should report misconduct that occurs during subvarsity matches to the appropriate school AD, not MSHSL.
- i. Disqualifications (red cards) issued to players during subvarsity games do not affect their eligibility to participate in varsity matches.
- j. The score book shall indicate when a player was ejected in a previous match. Officials shall check the varsity and JV score books prior to the start of each game. Use of an ineligible player shall result in automatic forfeiture. The referee must report the violation to the MSHSL office.

Rule 13 – Free Kicks

No NFHS or MSHSL modifications.

Rule 14 – Penalty Kick

The kicker may use a stutter step or hesitation move provided that there is no stopping and there is continuous movement toward the ball.

If there is an infringement by the attacking team and the ball does not go into the goal, there is no rekick.

- a. If the ball goes directly over the goal line, play shall restart with a goal kick.
- b. If the ball rebounds into play or is deflected out of bounds by the goalkeeper, the game shall be stopped and restarted with an indirect free kick for the defending team at the location of the infraction.
- c. If the ball is saved and held by the goalkeeper, play shall continue.

Rule 15 – Throw-In

If the ball fails to enter the field of play, the referee awards a throw-in to the opposing team from the same location.

Rule 16 – Goal Kick

No NFHS or MSHSL modifications.

Rule 17 – Corner Kick

Players of the defending team shall be at least 10 yards from the *ball* until it has been kicked.