

Dakota United Soccer Club

Recreational League

4th Grade Rules

Game Time:

Consists of 2 equal halves of 25 minutes. A 5-minute half-time should be given between the halves.

Number of Players:

9 players per team (including a goalkeeper) on the field at one time. Always use the same number of players for each team!

The Ball:

A size 4 or 5 ball is used for 4th Grade.

Substitutions:

We encourage equal playing time, but also substitute when players appear tired. The referee must be notified before a substitution can occur. By having the substitute stand on the half wayline, the referee can see that players are ready to come in at the next stop in play.

Officials:

The referee is in charge of all game activity and is to make sure each team abides by the rules. **The referee's decision is final.** It is the referee's responsibility to keep the game clock, check for injuries, and remind the players of proper game conduct.

Linesman or Side Referees:

There are usually two linesmen (volunteer parents) – one for each sideline. The main responsibility is to assist the referee by calling the ball out of bounds.

Players Equipment:

The usual uniform of the soccer player is a team shirt (provided by Dakota United), shorts, calf socks, shin guards, and shoes. Shin guards and calf socks are required. Nothing dangerous to another player may be worn. Cleats, usually made from rubber, plastic, aluminum, or leather, can be worn, but are not required. The goalkeeper must wear a different color than his/her teammates. All jewelry must be removed before play can start.

Kick Off:

Kick off occurs at the start of each half with teams alternating who starts with the ball. A kick off is also used to restart the game after a goal. The team who did not score, kicks off at the center line. Opponents need to be on the outside of the center circle. The player who takes the kick off cannot touch the ball a second time until the ball has been kicked by another player.

Ball in and out of Play:

After the ball has wholly crossed the sideline or goal line, it is out of play. Any ball which strikes the referee, goal post, corner flag, and remains on the soccer field is still in play.

Throw-ins:

After the ball has crossed the side line, the team that did not touch the ball last is awarded the throw in. The ball is thrown in with both hands in one continuous motion, starting from behind the head. Both feet must stay on the ground, on or behind the line when the ball is being released. If they do not execute the throw in correctly, explain to them the correct way – then award the throw in to the opposite team.

Goal Kick:

Awarded to the defense when the ball (after being touched by the offense) crosses the goal line, but not resulting in a goal. The ball is to be placed anywhere in the small goal area. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves, teammates can be inside the area when the ball is kicked, however opponents must be outside of the penalty area until the ball is in play.

Corner Kick:

Awarded to the offense when the ball (after being touched by the defense) crosses the goal line, but not resulting in a goal. An offensive player takes the kick from inside the quarter circle nearest the corner flag where the ball went out of play. A goal may be scored directly from the kick. Opponents need to be 10 yards away from the ball as it is kicked. The kicker may not kick the ball a second time until touched by another player.

Deliberate Heading (added for 2023):

Deliberate heading is not allowed. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.

If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

Offside:

According to the FIFA rulebook, a player is in an offside position if:

1. He/she is nearer to his/her opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.
2. A violation will occur when a player is in an offside position (previous bullet point) at the same time the ball is being passed forward to him.

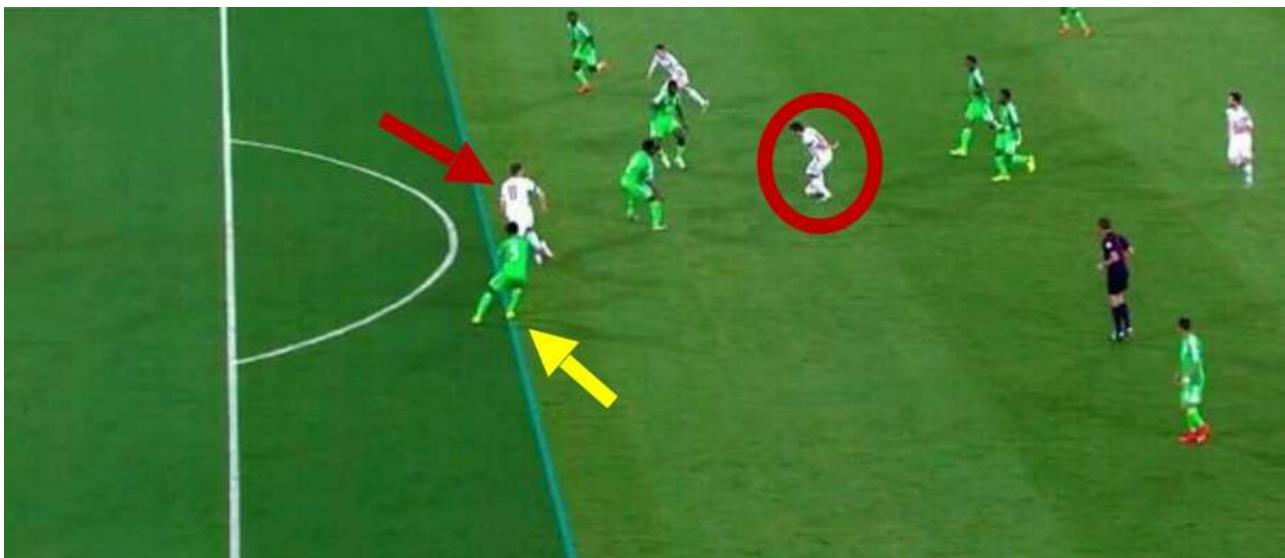
A player is **NOT** in an offside position if:

1. You receive the ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in or a corner.
2. You are in your own half of the pitch.
3. You are level with the second last or last two opponents.
4. You are level with or behind the ball.
5. You are not actively involved in play. You can stand in an offside position and not be declared offside until the ball is passed to you.

For any offside offence, the referee awards an indirect free-kick to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

We know. It can still be a little confusing. It's really easier to see it rather than read it. Let's look at some examples:

NOT OFFSIDE



In this image above, the player in the red circle is getting ready to pass the ball to the player with the red arrow pointed at him. Since the player with the red arrow has **NO** part of his body past the second to last defender (yellow arrow. Remember, the goal keeper is behind him), the player is **NOT** in an offside position.

OFFSIDE



In the picture above, the player in the red circle is getting ready to pass the ball forward to one of his teammates. The player with the red arrow pointed at him is in an offside position. The reason for that is because his body is past the player with the yellow arrow pointed at him who is considered the second to last defender (Don't forget the goalkeeper!). He is considered the second to last defender because he is the closer to his own goal line than any other player besides the goalkeeper.

However, if the player in the red circle decided to pass it to a player with a blue arrow, than it would not be considered offside because both players with blue arrows are not past the final defender (yellow arrow).

Still confused? Check out this short YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GePlbCsGniA>

US Soccer - Offside Made Easy

<https://usys-assets.ae-admin.com/assets/923/15/resources-ussoccer-offside-made-easy.pdf>

Free Kicks:

The two basic kicks awarded by the referee are:

1. **Direct Free Kicks:** A goal can be scored directly from the kick or passes to another player.
2. **Indirect Free Kicks:** The ball must touch another player before a goal can be scored.

Penalty Kicks:

A penalty kick is awarded after a serious rule infraction by the defense which takes place inside the penalty area. It is a direct kick taken 12 yards from the goal line. All players except the goalie and the kicker must be outside the penalty area. The goalie must stand on the goal line.

Fouls and Misconduct:

These are some fouls for which a referee can award a **DIRECT KICK** to the offensive team:

1. Kicking an opponent.
2. Tripping an opponent.

3. Jumping at an opponent.
4. Charges an opponent.
5. Strikes an opponent.
6. Pushes an opponent.
7. When tackling an opponent, you make contact with the player before the ball.
8. Holds or spits at an opponent.
9. Handles ball deliberately with hands excluding goalkeeper.

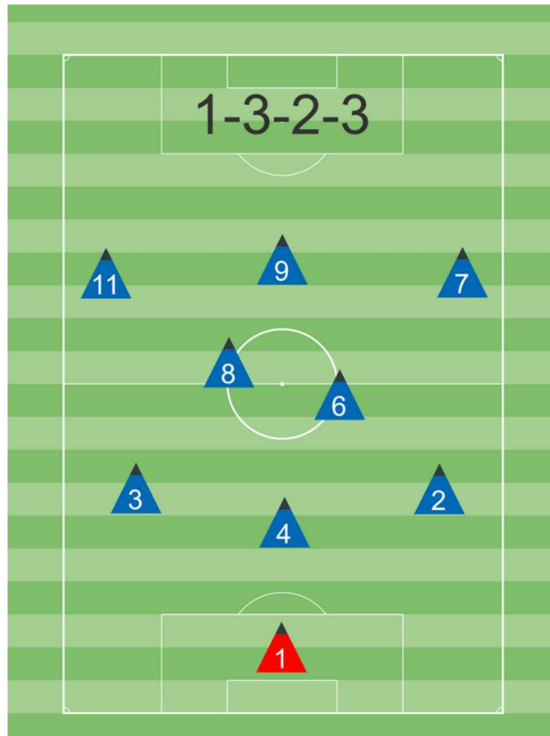
These are some fouls for which a referee can award an **INDIRECT KICK** to the offensive team:

1. Dangerous play.
2. Charging an opponent away from the ball.
3. Opponent obstruction when not playing ball.
4. Charging the goalkeeper except when the goalkeeper:
 - a. is holding the ball
 - b. is obstructing an opponent
 - c. has passed outside his goal area.
5. When the goalkeeper is in the penalty area, releases the ball, and touches it again before a player from the other team has touched it.
6. The goalkeeper deliberately touches the ball with his hands after it has been purposely kicked or thrown to him by another teammate.
7. The goalkeeper indulges in time wasting.

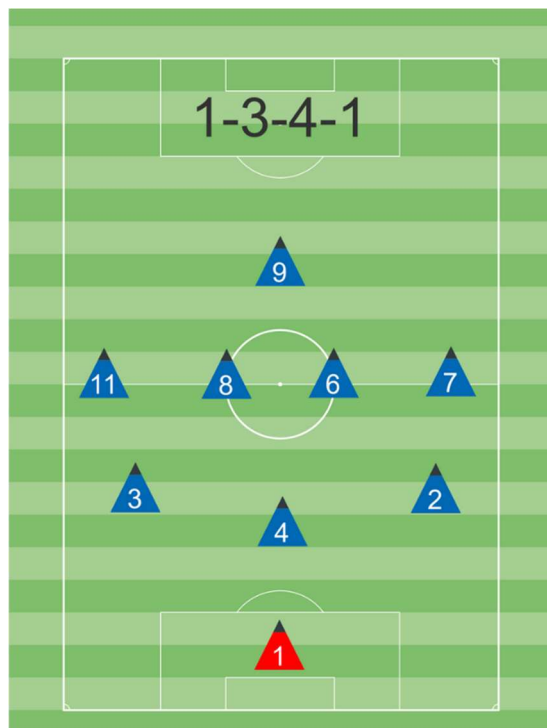
Most popular 9v9 formations:



- 1-3-3-2 is one of the most utilized formations in 9v9. By offering balance all over the field it allows a team to be strong when both attacking and defending.
- Three defenders (#3, #4, & #2) stay compact when defending. In attack, one of the outside backs (#3 or #2) may get forward to support.
- Three midfielders (#11, #8 & #7) provide defensively solidity with 2 lines of 3 in front of the goal. While in attack the wide midfielders (#11 & #7) can create extra width and support the forwards. In possession, the central midfielder helps link play between the back and forward lines.
- Two forwards (#10 & #9) create plenty of attacking threat and are tasked with both scoring and creating goals. Defensively, one player (#10) may drop into midfield to prevent overloads centrally and create a 1-3-4-1.



- 1-3-2-3 is another heavily utilized formation in 9v9 which can often be one of the easiest for young players to understand. Three forwards provide a slightly more attacking approach, however balance can still be found all over the field.
- Three defenders (#3, #4, & #2) stay compact when defending. In attack, one of the outside backs (#3 or #2) may get forward to support.
- Two midfielders (#6 & #8) offer an extra number in the middle of the field. One player (#6) may provide more defensive cover, while the other (#8) may provide more support to the forwards.
- Three forwards (#11, #9, & #7) create plenty of attacking threat and are tasked with both scoring and creating goals. The wide forwards (#11 & #7) not only create the width in attack, but also provide defensive solidity as they may drop into midfield and create a 1-3-4-1.



- 1-3-4-1 provides plenty of defensive solidity when teams get numbers behind the ball and by having extra numbers in midfield it can be easier to maintain possession out of the back.
- Three defenders (#3, #4, & #2) stay compact when defending. In attack, one of the outside backs (#3 or #2) may get forward to support.
- Four midfielders (#11, #8, #6, & #7) offer plenty of options in the middle and can help create numerical overloads when passing out of the back. Centrally, one player (#6) may provide more defensive cover, while the other (#8) may provide more support to the forwards.
- One forward (#9) is tasked with both scoring and creating goals. Although at first glance the #9 may seem a little isolated, this formation is adaptable and can quickly become a 1-3-3-2 with the support of #8 or a 1-3-2-3 with the support of #11 and #7.



- 1-2-4-2 is another popular attacking formation that allows more players to be involved in the attack, while remaining compact defensively through the middle of the field.
- Two defenders (#5 & #4) form a solid base at the back and provide strong defensive cover in a partnership.
- Four midfielders (#11, #8, #6, & #7) offer plenty of options in the middle and can help create numerical overloads when passing out of the back. Centrally, one player (#6) may provide more defensive cover, while the other (#8) may provide more support to the forwards. In the wide areas #11 and #7 have a big responsibility as they must support the forwards on offense as well as providing defensive support to the two defenders. Defensively at times this may look like a 1-4-2-2.
- Two forwards (#10 & #9) create plenty of attacking threat and are tasked with both scoring and creating goals. As there is plenty of midfield cover behind them there is less emphasis on one dropping back to help which can free the forwards to apply more pressure on the opposition defense when they have the ball.