

SMALL SIDED FOOTBALL (WEDNESDAYS) - RULES OF PLAY

N.B. These rules have been sanctioned by the Lancashire F A. (Revised January 2026)

1) PLAYERS

- a) Each match shall consist of two teams; any number of players may be registered at any given time.
- b) For each match, a team can have up to 9 nominated players: 6 starting players and a maximum of 3 substitutes.
- c) Any of the 9 nominated players may change place with the goalkeeper providing that.
 - a. There is a stoppage in play, and
 - b. The referee has been notified and given his consent.

Failure to comply with this rule will result in a penalty being awarded against the offending team.

- d) The minimum number of players a team must have to start play is 4 for 6-a-side.
- e) Substitutions should be made in the defending team's half of the pitch. The substitute should not enter the pitch until the exiting player has left the pitch. Substitutions that are made that seek to gain an unfair advantage shall be punished by the awarding of a penalty against the offending team. The referee must be informed of any substitutions. Substitutions can be made at any time, providing the ball is out of play. There is no limit to the number of substitutions permitted.
- f) If any player who is in the opinion of the referee, suffering from the effects of alcohol or drugs, they will not be allowed to take part in the match.

2) PLAYING EQUIPMENT

- a) Players must refrain from wearing jewellery (watches, rings, earrings etc.). Jewellery that is adequately covered i.e. taped up shall be permitted at the match officials' discretion.
- b) ALL PLAYERS MUST WEAR SHINPADS AT ALL TIMES. THIS RULE SHALL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.
- c) Teams are required to wear matching shirts, i.e. the same colour.
NB: Bibs are available for clashing team colours.
- d) Goalkeepers are permitted to wear long trousers and must wear shirts distinguishable from the rest of the outfield players and the referee.
- e) Work wear and/or jeans are not considered suitable match attire, so you will not be permitted to play if you wear these clothes.
- f) Shin-pads shall be covered with socks, as per Laws of the game.

3) FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- a) **Sliding tackles are not allowed** and shall be classed as dangerous play. Players could be reprimanded, cautioned, or dismissed for any infringement of this rule. A free kick shall be awarded to the opposition for any infringement of this rule. Outfield players must always stay on their feet. Sliding for the ball even when opposing players are not in close proximity is not permitted. The referee will determine what is deemed as a slide tackle.
- b) If at any time a team is 3 players short due to players being sent off, then the game shall be abandoned, resulting in an automatic 6-0 score line being awarded to the opposing team, providing that the opposing team is not already more than 6 goals in front.
- c) Yellow cards have been dispensed within small sided football as recommended by the F.A. A Blue card is now used instead accompanied with a "timed suspension" (sin bin) of 3 minutes.
- d) Any player found to be guilty of any of the 7 cautionable offences under Law 12 (Laws of Association Football 2007), shall now be shown a "blue card" and temporarily excluded from play for 3 minutes.
- e) If a player is then issued with a second "blue card" in the same game, then they shall be permanently excluded from play.
- f) Players may be shown a red card and dismissed for any of the 7 sending off offences under Law 12 (Laws of Association Football 2007).
- g) All offences are subject to the discipline processes of the County Football Association.
- h) Foul and abusive language and/or threatening behaviour towards an official, staff or the public could result in the player/team being reprimanded.

4) KICK OFFS

- a) A coin will be tossed at the beginning of each match to determine who has kick off/choice of ends.
- b) You are permitted to shoot straight from kick off.

- c) The ball can be passed in any direction from kick off.
- d) After a goal has been scored, play shall be restarted by a kick off from the centre spot to the opposing team.

5) GOALKICKS

When applicable, once the ball has passed the goal line (excluding the goal area) after being last touched by an attacking player; a goal kick shall be awarded.

Play will restart, by either of the following to options:

- a) The ball shall be placed on the ground, within the goalkeeper's area and kicked into play by the goalkeeper.
(All opposing players shall be at least 3 metres from the ball and are not allowed to challenge for the ball until the ball is deemed in play)

The ball shall be deemed in play once the ball has been played outside the goalkeeper's area.

Or

- b) The goalkeeper may throw or kick the ball from his hands releasing the ball in to play.
The ball shall be deemed in play once the ball has been played outside the goalkeeper's area.

N.B: No player may play the ball to themselves, or dribble the ball from the goalkeeper's area, unless the ball has been played out of the area and touched by another player.

Breach of this rule will result in a DIRECT FREE KICK being awarded to the opposition.

6) THROW INS

- a) Throw-ins shall be taken when the ball runs out of play on either side line
- b) Throw In is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball.
- c) Defending players must be at least 3 metres away, when a player is taking a Throw In.
- d) A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in.
- e) Throw-ins is a standing throw, not a run up

7) FREE KICKS

- a) All free kicks that are taken are to be **direct**.
- b) Players on defending teams are required to be at least 3 metres away from the ball when a free kick is being taken.
- c) Players refusing to comply with the 3-metre rule will be cautioned.

8) PENALTY KICKS

- a) A penalty kick shall be taken from the marked penalty spot on the pitch.
- b) All players other than the taker and the goalkeeper must be behind the ball and be a minimum of 3 metres away from the penalty spot.
- c) The goalkeeper must be on their goal line.
- d) The penalty shall be retaken if rule c is not adhered to, and the kick is unsuccessful.
- e) The penalty kicker is only allowed 1 step before striking the ball.

9) BACK PASS

- a) A **penalty** kick shall be awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own area touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate.
- b) A **penalty** kick shall be awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own area touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate.
- c) A **free kick** shall be awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper passes directly back to a player of whom he received the ball from. The goalkeeper needs to distribute the ball to another member of his teammates. The free kick shall occur from where the outfield touches the ball.

10) CORNER KICKS

- a) Opposing players must be 5 metres away from the ball when a corner is being taken.
- b) Infringement of this rule will result in a player being reprimanded/ cautioned.

11) OFFSIDE RULE

There is no offside rule.

12) THE GOALKEEPER AND HIS AREA

- a) Players on the defending team and the attacking team are not permitted to enter the goalkeeper's area. If a member of the defending team enters the goalkeeper's area, the attacking team will receive a penalty kick. If a member of the attacking team enters the oppositions area, the defending team will receive a direct freekick
- b) The goalkeeper can handle the ball only when he is in his area.
- c) To prevent any time wasting, the goalkeeper must return the ball into play within 6 seconds. Any goalkeeper found to be time wasting by the referee shall be penalised by the awarding of a free kick (3 metres out) to the opposition. Persistent infringement of this rule could result in the goalkeeper being cautioned/ dismissed.
- d) The Goalkeeper cannot leave his/her area. If he/she does so this will result in a penalty kick.

NOTE- With regards to the goalkeeper's area, the line or 'the D' is ambiguous.

13) REFEREES

A referee shall be appointed to officiate in all games and shall have the same powers and duties as laid down in the FA Laws of the Game. All referees shall be registered with the County Football Association.

If there are any other rules or laws of the game not covered by these competition rules, then the FA Laws of the Game shall apply.

14) APPEALS AND PROTESTS

- All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretations of the rules shall be referred to the League Co-coordinator and/or the L.S.V management team.
- Protests and complaints about anything unrelated to disciplinary action by the ruling officials must be lodged with the League Co-coordinator and/or L.S.V Company management team within 7 days of the occurrence.

Any appeals against fines or bans given from the Lancashire FA are to be lodged with the Lancashire FA.

N.B. – LSV / THE FA AN BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE THESE RULES AT ANY GIVEN POINT WITHOUT NOTICE