

MELBOURNE SPORTS INSTITUTE

1. Field.

Safety, excess water, cricket pitches too hard or dangerous, Flags pointing into field/on halfway line. Spectators/benches too close too pitch. Lines need fixing. Nets secure, not dangerous/holes.

2. Ball.

Not too hard especially for younger players/cold weather/wet day. Spares ready. Check law book for specifications of balls and local laws for size. Make sure ball is safe.

3. Number of players.

11 starters. Count them before start and after half time. Once a team has less than 7 on the field, the game ends. Check regulations if not sure but most school games are interchange. Don't allow too many changes especially if near the end of the match and the coach is trying to waste time. Rather than one at a time, ask for 2 or 3 at a time. If the sub is not ready, don't allow the change.

Count subs on and players off. FFV weekend games are from the halfway line and players have to leave the field before subs can enter. Depending on the situation, in school matches you don't have to be so strict.

Allow subs (especially defenders) to get into position. If it's a keeper, make sure they are ready. If subs are wasting time, hurry them up, even caution them. You can even not allow the sub as long as they are not injured! If the player coming on takes too long to get into position, start the game!

Make sure subs don't confuse the AR's or yourself. Get them to sit down, wear a bib etc. If you discover or are advised there are too many players on a team, talk to the coaches to work out the problem but if the dispute can't be resolved, note when it was discovered, the score and do a report.

4. Players equipment

Make sure there is nothing dangerous. No watches, jewellery or anything that can cause injury such as casts, knee guards with metal/hard parts. Make sure glasses are safe with no sharp corners. School games you can ask the coaches if they will allow players to wear non safety glasses, FFV is NO! You can't ask a player to lift up clothing, but if you see jewellery/anything not allowed under clothing, you can remove the player. Look for watches/GPS's/rings under sweat bands/tape.

Players shirts need to be similar to each other apart from keepers. Make sure your shirt does not clash either!

Shin guards have to be worn and check they cover at least half the lower leg. If a player removes shin guards after the game starts, caution them.

Check boots for missing screw ins.

Check keepers gloves for danger. If they have tracksuit pants on, there is a chance they don't have shin guards! Only keepers can wear baseball type caps.

5. The Referee

Look the part! Have 2 flags, 2 timepieces, 2 pens/pencils, notebook, yellow/red cards, 2 different whistles, coin, wet weather bag (coin bag). Write details of match in notepad.

Talk to both teams and coaches about what you expect from them and your style as a referee. What you allow and don't allow! Don't allow dissent, swearing, studs up tackles, shirt holding.

Referee to the standard of the game. Low level or new players to the game not so strict. Show players how to take throw-ins if they don't know. Explain why you give or don't give a free. IE. Can't call mine/leave it, foot up at throw, ball didn't leave area at goal kick. Warn keepers to call name and can't pick up ball from deliberate pack pass.

Higher levels, "A" teams or harder games, be stronger. Be strong on reckless tackles, dissent bad behaviour. Use the cards and resist the use of talking too much. Better to show hand jesters so everyone knows what you are doing! In school games ask coaches if they want 5 minute sin-bins for a yellow card!

Don't be noticed! Allow the game to flow by only whistling if it is needed to correct illegal play where there is no advantage. If the ball goes out, don't whistle unless the players keep playing on as when it is a close call along the touchline. If it is a rough game, use the whistle more. Change the sound for the type of free or if you need players attention.

Look for intent when giving frees and wait to see if there is advantage! Hold the whistle low in your hand, not high or around your neck. It's a bad look! Unless it is a bad foul, wait a few seconds to see if there is advantage. Especially in the attacking 3rd.

KEEP UP WITH PLAY. It's a bad look when the referee does not run. Anticipate the play. The better the skill level, the easier this is. Look where the ball is going and head there, but try not to get in the way especially in the attacking 3rd. Best to look at play side on. Use the diagonal but try to keep the AR's in view.

Goal kicks or Keeper has possession of the ball: Go to where the ball will go! Look at the standard. Small/weaker players, check the ball leaves the penalty area. Skilled/stronger go to the halfway line.

Corners: Stand so you can see for encroaching, pushing, holding but not in the way.
Throw-ins: Stand in line so players know where to take it from but not in the way of players

KNOW THE LAWS OF THE GAME. Especially the bread and butter laws. What is an indirect or direct free? Throw-ins, goal kicks, Rules for that competition.

If you get 10 referees looking at the same incident, 3 may point one way, 3 the other way and 3 will not give a free. The last may miss the incident or their view was obstructed! If you are not sure, ask someone. We make mistakes, we are human.

6. The Assistant Referee

Official AR's are neutral and know the rules. Game will be very easy for the referee. Most referees don't have neutral AR's!

The other assistant referee is the club/player AR. Game for the referee will be a lot harder!

Assume all your AR's are not neutral. They will not keep up with play, will not know the rules, may cheat, will give wrong signals or signals for offside that are not or no offside when it is. They will signal the ball out of play too early or when it does not go out.

Give instructions to both AR's after the coin toss.

Most Referees are instructed to have the AR do their own attack. I tried this and do the reverse. I find it better. Try both and see which you like!

I instruct AR's to make sure players are interfering with play for offside's, but even if they signal, I will more often than not allow play to go on if the ball goes to the keeper, a defender or I am not sure if the call was correct. I tell the AR if a goal is scored and they put up their flag for offside, I will ask them for details if I am not sure from my angle. Often the club AR gets it wrong or signals the wrong player or don't understand the rules.

Yes, some will cheat, but it is the same if they do their attack. They will cheat as well, but more often they are ball watching and forget about offside! It is hard enough for official AR's to keep up with fast players let alone a club AR!

If an AR is not doing their job, can't run or simply cheating, replace them or ignore them if there is no one else!

7. The duration of the match

Know before hand the match length. Shorten the match to equal halves if there is a delay to the start time and either you can't stay longer or the away team needs to leave by a certain time.

Normally you don't allow injury time for lower level school matches or junior games.

Time is extended at the end of 1st or 2nd half only for a penalty.

Allow a 5 minute half time break for most matches. Senior games allow up to 15 minutes.

8. Start and restart of play (K.O)

Toss a coin; pick the colour of the whistle, rock, paper, scissors.

The person winning the toss chooses ends only. The loser takes the K.O.

Players must be in their own half. Count player numbers at the start of each half.

Write down who kicks off and the time (in case your watch fails)

Ball must move forward

The same player can't touch it a second time in a row.

The team conceding a goal takes the next K.O.

Once you allow a goal and the other team K.O off again, you cannot disallow the goal!

2nd half is started by the other team that didn't start the game

Drop ball if no team had control of the ball if game needed stopping.

9. Ball in and out of play

Ball is out of play when it wholly crosses the touch or goal line either on the ground or in the air or the referee stops play

Ball is in play if it stays on the field even if it rebounds off a post, corner flag or referee or an AR (if the AR is in the field or on the line).

10. Method of scoring

The whole of the ball crosses the goal line completely between the posts and under the crossbar and there has been no infringements of the rules by the attacking team.

11. Offside

It is not an offence to be in an offside position.

Offside is judged when the ball was last played by a team mate not when the player in an offside position receives the ball.

If the player gains an advantage or interferes with the other team, then it is offside.

If the ball deflects or is kicked sideways by the defending team there is no offside unless they are in front of the goals, the kick was a blocked shot or continues on a relatively straight path to the player in the offside position.

12. Fouls and misconduct

The referee's job is to protect the player with the ball. Be strict with tackles from behind and studs up. Just because the player gets the ball first there can be a free if it is dangerous. Also look out for rough play after the kick as in a defender clears the ball and is then bundled over by an attacker. Same for an attacker shoots and is then fouled by a defender. Wait to see the result and give a free if no goal.

Fouls can be **careless** where the player doesn't show care, can also be accidental – No cards
Reckless where the player doesn't care about the danger - Yellow card.

Uses Excessive Force which is far in excess of that needed in normal play and there was a great chance that injury might occur to the opponent – Red card

Give yellow cards for cheating. ie: holding to gain an unfair advantage in attacks or defence, deliberate handball to stop an attack or score a goal, simulating being fouled. Dissent by word or action to an official. Persistent infringements of the laws.

Give red cards for serious foul play, violent conduct, bad foul language, stopping a goal or a good chance to score a goal by a foul or offence punishable by a free kick.

13. Free Kicks (Types of free kicks)

Frees are either direct or indirect
Read page 21 for a list of free kicks.

Direct – Goal can be scored direct.

Indirect – Ball must touch another player before a goal can be scored. This can be a team mate, defender and also a keeper who may get a fingertip to the ball!

The player taking the free is not allowed to touch the ball again until it touches another player.

If the player takes a free and it comes off a post, crossbar, corner flag, referee or AR (inside the field of play, and they touch it again, it is an indirect free to the other team.

Opposition players must be 10 yards (9.15m) from the ball.

Keep arm raised above your head for indirect frees till it goes out of play or touches a player.

14. Penalty Kick

Any direct free kick in the attacking penalty area is awarded a penalty.

All players must stay out of the penalty area, the penalty arc and behind the penalty mark till the ball is kicked forward.

Kicker must be identified and not hesitate in their run once the referee signals.

The keeper can run along the line, but cannot come off his line till the kick is taken.

The keeper must face forward and can't lean against a post.

Outcome of kick		
Who Infringes	Goal	No Goal
Attacking player	Penalty is Retaken	Indirect free kick or advantage
Defending player	Goal	Penalty is Retaken
Both	Penalty is Retaken	Penalty is Retaken

15. Throw-In

Where it went out, 2 metres either side of where it went out facing the field of play.

Part of both feet must stay on the ground on or behind the line.

Big throws starting behind the head and releasing after it goes past the head.

Defenders must be at least 2 metres away. Don't allow defenders to distract too much.

If the thrower takes too long, warn everyone first (loudly), then issue caution.
If the ball does not enter the field (in the air or on the ground), throw-in is retaken.
A goal can't be scored directly from a throw-in.

16.Goal kick.

Anywhere in the goal area.

If junior players struggle to clear the penalty area, move the ball level with the penalty spot.

All attackers have to remain outside the penalty area till the ball leaves the area.

You can have 11 defenders in the area at a goal kick!

Ball must leave the area before the ball can be played.

A goal can be scored directly from a goal kick (opposition goal)

17.Corner Kick

Ball must either be in the arc or touching the line.

Corner flag cannot be moved.

Advise juniors to move the ball if they don't understand and are running into the flag.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

Kicker can't touch it a second time in a row.

Don't allow cheating corners.

Defenders must be 10 yards away.

A goal can be scored direct from a corner kick.