



# FOUL RECOGNITION

## Entry Referee Training



# What is defines a Soccer FOUL ?



**- SOCCER DEFINITION -**  
**A Soccer Foul is a violation of Law 12 committed...**

- 1. By a player**
- 2. Against an opponent who is also a player (except handling)**
- 3. On the field of play**
- 4. While the ball is in play**

# FOULS COME IN 2 FLAVORS

**Indirect Free Kick**

**IFK Fouls**

**&**

**Direct Free Kick**

**DFK Fouls**



# IS IT A FOUL?



Simply use the definition

# IFK Fouls

1. Playing in a dangerous manner
2. Impeding the progress of an opponent with no contact
3. Preventing goalkeeper from releasing ball
4. Goalkeeper offenses

# **IFK - DANGEROUS PLAY**

**General Definition** ... Playing in a dangerous manner is any situation where a player, while trying to play the ball, endangers someone (including oneself) and exposes them to the risk of possible injury. In youth games dangerous play, more often than not, is a result of an accidental play situation.

Playing in a dangerous manner involves no physical contact between the players. If there is physical contact, then it becomes a DFK offense.

For a playing situation to be considered as a dangerous play foul it must be committed with an opponent nearby **and** in such a manner that it causes an opponent to cease active play for the ball so as to avoid receiving or causing injury.

The dangerous action becomes an offense only when an opponent (not a teammate) is adversely or unfairly affected.

# **IFK – IMPEDING (No Contact)**

**General Definition .... Impeding the progress of an opponent means “moving into the path” of the opponent to obstruct, block, interfere with, slow down or force a change of direction by an opponent, when the ball is not within playing distance of either player.**

**All players have a right to their position on the field of play, being in the way of an opponent is not the same as “moving into the way” of an opponent.**

**Impeding involves no physical contact between the players. If there is physical contact, then it becomes a DFK offense.**

**Shielding the ball is permitted, as long as the ball is kept with playing distance. However, extension of the arms to obstruct an opponent is illegal.**

# **IFK - OFFENSES AGAINST GK**

**When GKs gain possession of the ball with their hands, it cannot be challenged or played by an opponent in any manner.**

**Goalkeepers are considered to be in clear possession of the ball with their hands:**

- While the ball is held between their hands**
- While the ball is secured between their hand and any surface (e.g. the ground, goal post or own body)**
- While holding the ball in an outstretched open palm**
- While in the act of bouncing the ball on the ground**
- While in the act of tossing the ball into the air.**

**A ball controlled by a GK using means other than the hands may be legally challenged by an opponent.**

# **IFK - OFFENSES AGAINST GK**

**Challenging for the ball that is in the clear possession (hands) of the GK.**

**Attempting to prevent the GK from releasing the ball from his hands.**

**A player must be penalized for playing in a dangerous manner if he kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the GK is in the process of releasing it.**

**Attempting to restrict the movement of the GK by unfairly impeding him, e.g. at the taking of a corner kick.**

# IFK - OFFENSES BY GK

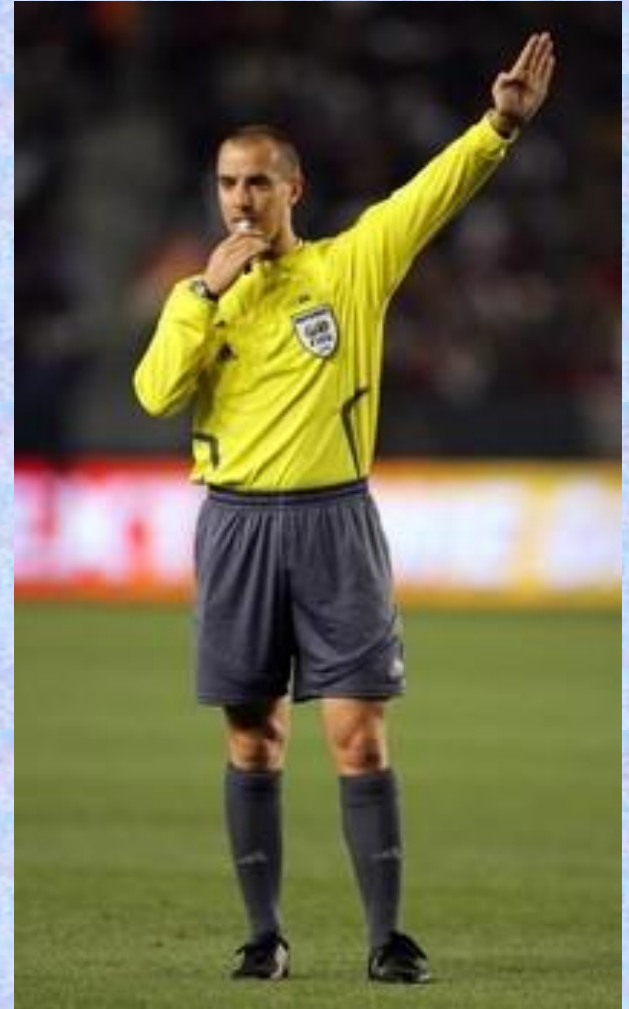
**Goalkeeper inside own Penalty Area:**

- a) Taking more than 6 seconds while controlling the ball with their hands before releasing it into play
- b) Regaining hand control of the ball prior to being touched by any other player
- c) Touching ball with hands after ball having been deliberately kicked to GK by teammate
- d) Touching ball with hands after receiving it directly from a throw-in by a teammate

# DFK Fouls

**There are 10 DFK Fouls**

**3 DFK Fouls are not  
considered potentially  
violent**



# DFK Fouls

For the three (3) non-violent DFK Fouls the referee is only concerned with whether or not the action occurred, not with how it was done.

- **Deliberate Handling** .... Not a violent act
- **Holding** ..... Generally not a violent act
- **Spitting At** .... Generally not a physically violent act, but .... **Always, a vile and repulsive act.**

# DFK - HANDLING

**General Definition** .... The foul of handling involves the act by a player to make **deliberate** contact with the ball using his hand or arm. It is the result of the movement towards the ball with the hand or arm (not the ball towards the hand).

The position of the hand, by itself, does not necessarily mean that a foul has occurred, especially if it is a natural playing position. The contact of the ball by the offending player must be planned and deliberate.

A player's hand movement, which is the result of an instinctive and protective reflex action (unexpected ball at close range) does not constitute a deliberate attempt to make contact with or play the ball.

If a player benefits from a ball that makes contact with the hand or arm (accidental, i.e. ball to hand not hand to ball), a handling offense has **NOT** occurred.

The time of contact between hand and ball is when a handling foul (or not) decision must be made, not at a time after the fact.

# **DFK - HOLDING**

**General Definition ....** Holding (or pulling) is the act of a player to prevent an opponent from moving past or around using the hand, the arms or the body.

Holding offenses are typically non-violent, but are a common tactic to prevent an opponent from gaining possession of the ball or taking up an advantageous position. Oftentimes it involves grabbing or holding onto a piece of clothing.

Holding offenses are often an inadvertent tendency that younger and/or lesser skilled players exhibit. For older and more experienced players a holding offense tends to be more of a deliberate act.

Deliberate or unintentional the act of holding an opponent is still considered to be a foul.

# **DFK - SPITTING AT**

**General Definition .... Spitting At is the deliberate act or gesture by a player directed at an opponent to convey anger, displeasure, dislike and/or disdain and contempt.**

**Spitting At is the **gesture of spitting** in the direction of the opponent regardless of the distance between them. It should not be interpreted as being only an act of actually being close enough to be able to spit on an opponent.**

**In many cultures the gesture of spitting at is the ultimate insult. It should always be considered as a vile and repulsive act, which warrants a red card and send-off.**

# DFK Fouls

**There are 10 DFK Fouls**

**7 DFK Fouls are  
potentially violent and  
defined as either**

**.... careless**

**or**

**.... reckless**

**or**

**.... using excessive force**



# **CARELESS**

**Means that a player shows a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge ... has not exercised due caution when making a play, usually an unintentional act.**

**Players are always responsible for playing “under control” and with a sense of awareness with respect to their surroundings, no matter what their age.**

**Typically a result of a lack of skill or ability, poor judgment or timing, and/or a miscalculation of strength.**

**No additional disciplinary action is needed, if the foul is judged to be “careless”.**

# **RECKLESS**

**Means that a player has acted with complete disregard for the safety of, the danger to, or the consequences for their opponent. Clearly outside the norm of fair play.**

**Intentionally playing without any concern, i.e. “the bull in a china shop” syndrome. Playing in an “out-of-control” fashion with a designed intent to intimidate an opponent (but not with the intent to injure) or to gain an unfair advantage.**

**A player shall be shown a yellow card and cautioned, if the foul is judged to be “reckless”.**

# **USING EXCESSIVE FORCE**

**Means that a player has far exceeded the use of force necessary to make a fair play for the ball and has total disregard for an opponent's safety.**

**Totally beyond the bounds of normal play. It is usually a deliberate act with the implied intent to physically harm or injure an opponent.**

**A player shall be shown a red card and sent off, if it is judged that “excessive force” was used in committing the foul.**

**Seven (7) potentially violent DFK Fouls that the Referee must consider “how” the action was done, i.e. careless, **reckless**, or with **excessive force**:**

- **Kicks an opponent** (or attempts to kick)
- **Strikes an opponent** (or attempts to strike)
- **Trips an opponent** (or attempts to trip)
- **Jumps At an opponent**
- **Charges an opponent**
- **Pushes an opponent**
- **Tackles or Challenges an opponent**

# IS IT A FOUL?



Simply use the definition

# **DFK - KICKING**

**General Definition ....** The act of kicking is the deliberate action of swinging the foot in a kicking motion, whether it is at an opponent or the ball. A kicking offense occurs when the foot makes contact with an opponent regardless of whether the contact is first made with the ball.

After having kicked the ball, if the player's follow-thru makes contact with an opponent, a kicking foul has been committed, unless the opponent runs into the kicker's foot.

When a player slips and in the act of falling down his feet swing out in a kicking motion, it is not considered to be a deliberate act of kicking.

**Attempted Kicking** is a deliberate act made solely with the intent to do harm to an opposing player by making physical contact using the foot, but no contact ensues. It is not considered to be an accidental act and should be punished with a send-off.

# **DFK - STRIKING**

**General Definition** .... The act of striking is a deliberate movement or swinging of the arm whether it is directed at an opponent or not, wildly swinging the elbows to clear space or quickly turning with outstretched arms due to momentum. A striking offense occurs when the player's hand or arm subsequently makes contact with an opponent.

A striking offense can also be committed by making direct contact with an opponent using an elbow, the head, a knee or by throwing an object (including the ball).

When a player slips and his arms swing out to break an accidental fall, it is not considered to be a deliberate act of striking.

**Attempted Striking** is a deliberate act made solely with the intent to do harm to an opposing player by making physical contact by using the hand, arm, elbow, etc., but no contact ensues. It is not considered to be an accidental act and should be punished with a send-off.

# DFK - TRIPPING

**General Definition** .... The act of extending the foot (feet) or body that is clearly directed at and physically knocks an opponent off their feet or causes them to lose their balance (regardless of whether they fall to the ground or not).

A slide tackle from the rear that physically impedes the progress of an opponent is considered to be a tripping offense.

Stepping in and undercutting an opponent, who has jumped up in the air, is also considered to be a tripping violation.

However, when a player falls over an opponent it ends up in effect that he has been “tripped”, but actually it is only as a result of natural play and **NOT** due to a directed extension of the foot or body by an opponent .... This is **NOT** a tripping offense.

**Attempted Tripping** is a deliberate extension of the foot in an attempt to intentionally trip an opponent that is unsuccessful.

# **DFK - JUMPING AT**

**General Definition ....** The deliberate act of jumping in the air, which ends up being in the direction of an opponent, whether intended to jump into the opponent or to head the ball or just to gain space.

It is the launching one's body toward an opponent either from a standing or running position. Normally contact is not required, as specified by the word "at", but it also includes when a player jumps through the air, feet first, with a two-footed attempt to "tackle" away the ball from an opponent.

Jumping At can be done (1) to intimidate or (2) in a feigned manner (really meant to distract an opponent) or (3) in a genuine, but unsuccessful attempt to gain the ball.

Goalkeepers who jump into or diagonally over a player or players are in effect jumping at an opponent.

Jumping up in the air vertically to head the ball is a deliberate act, but since the direction is straight up and not toward an opponent, and is regarded as an attempt to play the ball, it is NOT considered to be a foul.

... Must be able to differentiate between "jumping at" and "undercutting".

# **DFK - CHARGING**

**General Definition** .... The act of charging is when a player within playing distance of the ball challenges for space using physical contact without using his arms or elbows.

A fair charge is commonly defined as “shoulder to shoulder” contact with both players having at least one foot on the ground and using an acceptable normal level of force.

An unfair charge occurs when (1) player contact is not “shoulder to shoulder”, (2) either player has both feet off the ground and/or (3) performed with clearly an undue level of force or undertaken with a running start. The amount of force permitted must be relative to the age, size and experience of the players involved.

# **DFK - PUSHING**

**General Definition ....** The offense of pushing is the act of a player making contact with an opponent, whether it is with his hands, arms or body, in an attempt to move or shove his opponent away.

Any extension of the arms or elbows away from the body or thrusting of the body which is used to shove an opponent is considered to be an act of pushing.

A fair “shoulder to shoulder” charge quickly deteriorates into the foul of pushing when the hand or arm is raised or moved outward and makes forceful contact with an opponent.

# **DFK – TACKLING**

**General Definition ....** A tackling foul is the act by a player attempting to take the ball away from an opponent using his feet in order to gain possession that results in the player making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.

If a player challenges an opponent in an attempt to take the ball away, first makes contact with the ball before subsequently making contact with the opponent, a tackling foul has not been committed. Depending on the circumstances, this could be a kicking or tripping foul, and if so then by definition it cannot be considered as a tackling foul.

Simply put, a tackling foul requires the act of making contact with an opponent prior to contact with the ball. Typically a slide tackle that results in contact with an opponents foot or leg is not considered to be an act of kicking, but instead is a tackling offense.

# RECOGNIZING A FOUL



Is it really a foul?

If it is a foul, does it need  
to be called?

# Age/Skill Appropriate Fouls

**Referees MUST continually adapt and adjust their perspective in order to be in concert with the skill level of the players involved, the level of the match, as well as with the different play-by-play situations as they develop.**

# Age/Skill Appropriate Fouls

## Foul calls must be recognized and adjusted to:

- Insure the **SAFETY** of all participants no matter what and above all other criteria
- Fit the acceptable level of the match (BU16, GU11, etc.)
- Suit the level of ability of the individual player being fouled (skilled, average, unskilled, etc.)
- Differentiate between klutziness and purposeful
- Fit the gender tendencies, i.e. males tend to use their upper body strength, whereas females tend to use their lower body strength

# Age/Skill Appropriate Fouls

## WATCH-OUTS

- Youth-age referees must be aware **not** to officiate younger matches at the same level or with the same expectations as they may play their own games.
- Adult referees must be aware **not** to officiate all games as if they were a U18 competitive boys match.



# Review Question

**98. Player A25 deliberately punches his own goalkeeper in their Penalty Area, while the ball is being played near midfield. The referee stops play. What is the correct restart?**

- A. Dropped ball in the Penalty Area
- B. Penalty kick for opponents
- C. Dropped ball near midfield
- D. IFK for opponents near midfield
- E. IFK for opponents in Penalty Area
- F. DFK for opponents near midfield