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Law 11 - Offside



**U.S. Soccer Federation Referee Program
Entry Level Referee Course
Competitive Youth Training
Small Sided and Recreational Youth Training**






Law 11 - Offside

Offside – What is it?

- ❖ Offside is an offense (not a foul or misconduct) where the referee stops play and awards an indirect free kick (IFK) to the defending team from the position of the offending player.
- ❖ For the offside offense to be called, an attacking player in an offside position must become involved in active play (in the referee's opinion)

Remember
it takes

Position
+
Involvement = **Offside**

An illustration of a soccer game in progress. A player in a red jersey is in an offside position, having just kicked the ball. A line connects the player to the ball. Other players are visible on the field, and a goal is in the background.A soccer ball with a Nike logo.A diagram of a soccer field showing the positions of players and the ball.



Offside Position

A player is in an offside position when they are:

1. in the opponent's half of the field, AND
2. closer to the opposing team's goal line than the ball, AND
3. closer to the opposing team's goal line than the second to last opponent.

For a player to be in an offside position, all 3 of these conditions must be met.



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Offside Position

“In the opponent’s half of the field” means any part of the player’s head, body or feet, but not including the arms, is in the opponent’s half (excluding the halfway line).

The halfway line is considered to be “neutral” for the purpose of determining offside position. As long as no part of the player’s head, body or feet extends beyond the line itself the player remains in an onside position.

As such, a player straddling the halfway line would be in an offside position.



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Offside Position

“Closer to the opposing team’s goal line” means any part of the player’s head, body or feet, but not including the arms, is closer to the opponent’s goal line than both the ball and the second to last opponent.

In other words, any part of the body that can legally play the ball is considered when determining offside position.

And remember - It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position.



No Offside Position

A player cannot be in an offside position when they are:

- Even with the ball ... or
- Even with the second to last defender ... or
- Even with the last two defenders (if the defenders are even with each other) ... or
- Not beyond the halfway line ... or
- Completely in own half of field.

A player cannot be in an offside position if any of the above conditions are met.



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7 v 7 OFFSIDE



The U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiative recommends that 7v7 youth games use modified field markings that include a “Build-Out Line”.

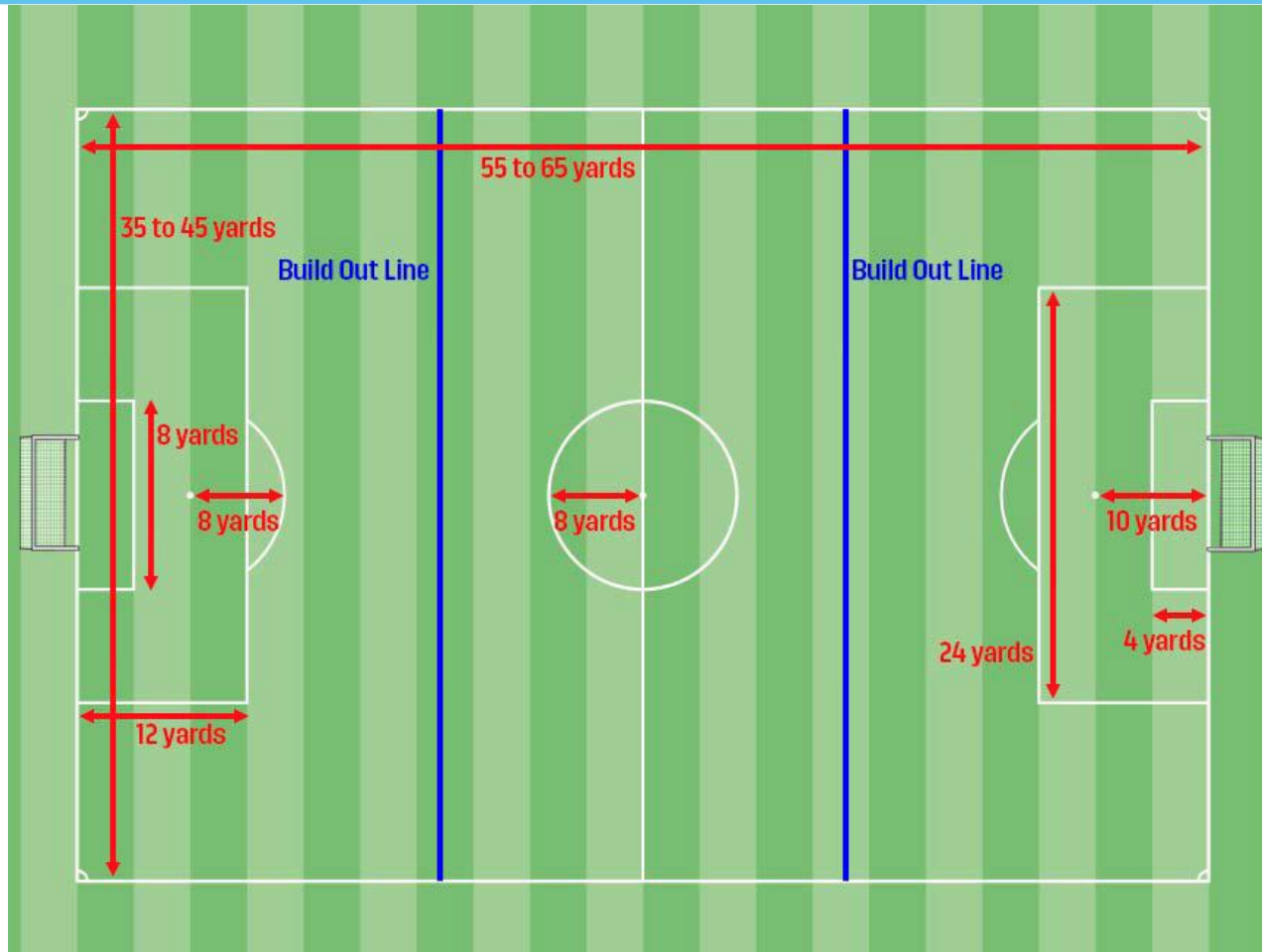
The Build-Out Line will be used in 7v7 youth games to identify and denote where Offside offenses can be called.



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7 v 7 OFFSIDE



7 v 7 Build-Out Lines



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7 v 7 OFFSIDE



Players can not be penalized for an Offside offense if they are between the halfway line and their opponents Build-Out Line.

Players can only be penalized for an Offside offense that takes place between their opponents Build-Out Line and their opponents goal line.

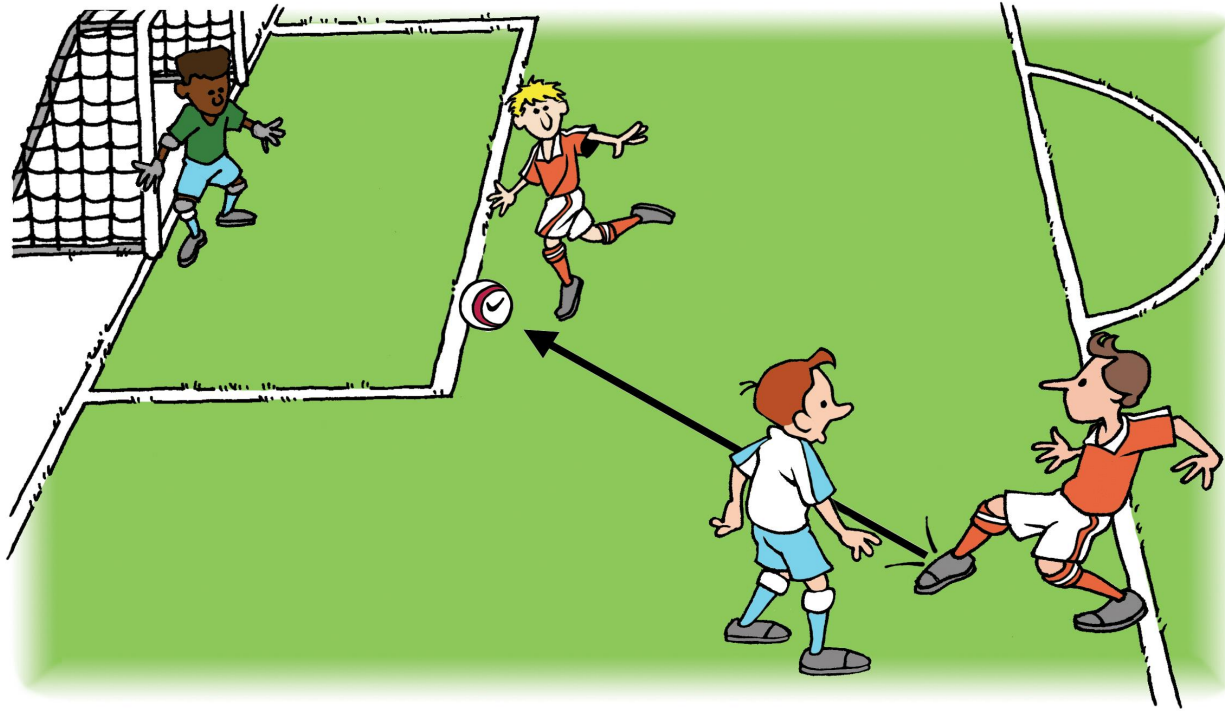


The Offside Offense

- ❖ A player in an offside position is guilty of the offside offense if they become involved in active play (in the opinion of the referee).
- ❖ Involved in active play means:
 1. interfering with play, or
 2. interfering with an opponent, or
 3. gaining an advantage from the offside position.
- ❖ Remember the offense is determined by where the player is at the time the ball was touched or played by a teammate, not where they receive the ball.



Interfering Play



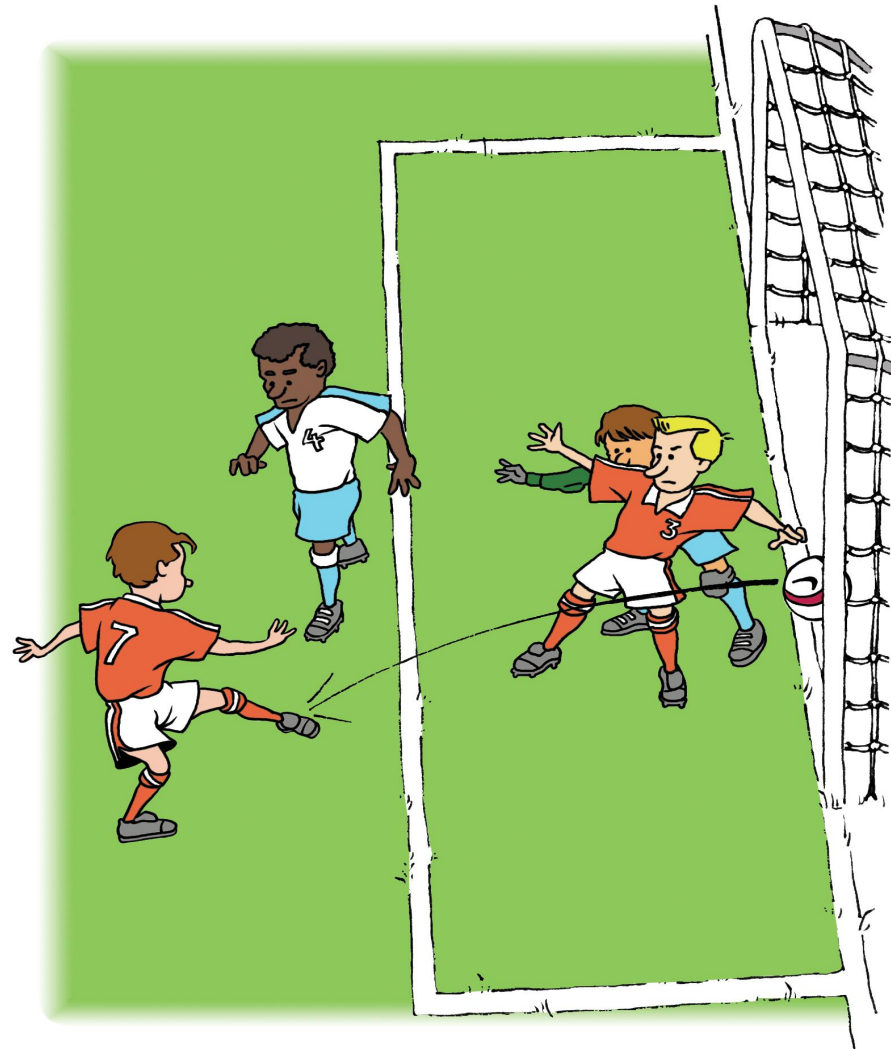
Interfering with play means playing or touching a ball passed or last touched by a teammate.



Interfering Opponent

Interfering with an opponent means preventing an opponent from playing the ball by:

- **Blocking their vision or line of sight**
- **Blocking their path**
- **Distracting or deceiving them**

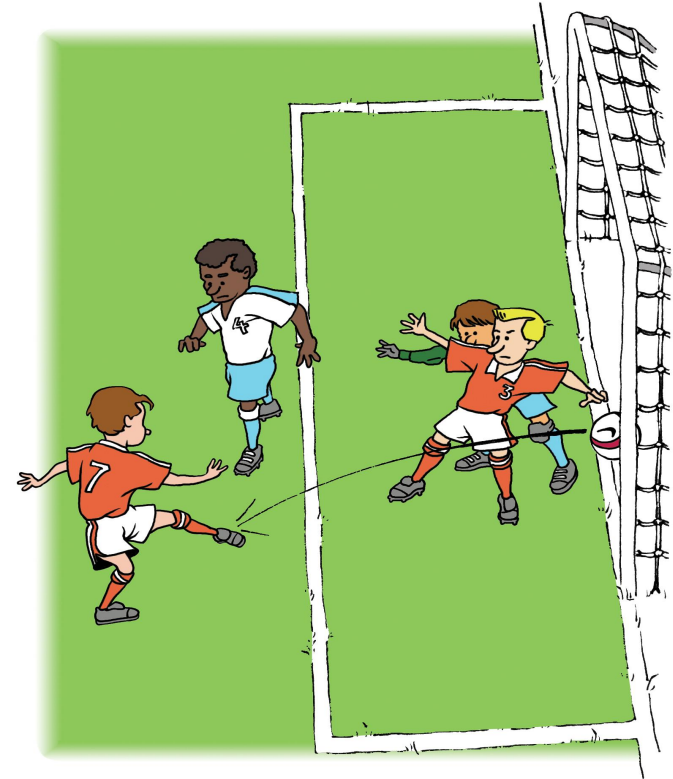




Interfering Opponent



- challenging an opponent for the ball
- clearly attempting to play a ball which is close to an opponent when this action impacts him
- making an obvious action which clearly impacts the ability of an opponent to play the ball





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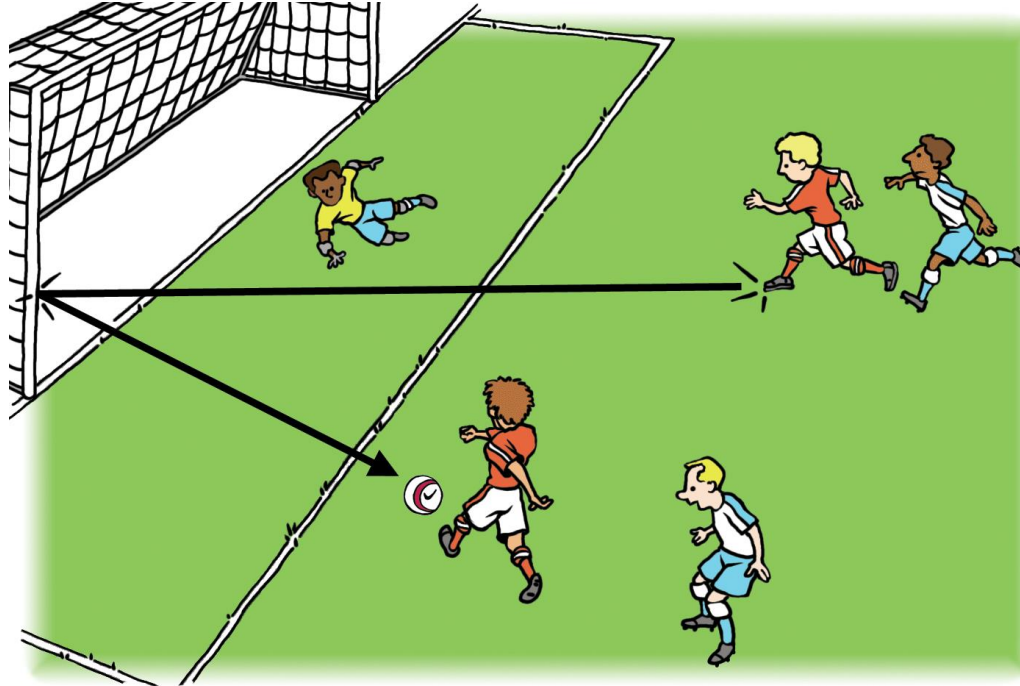


Interfering Opponent

Distracting or deceiving usually means the attacker's movement causes an opponent to move to defend the challenge of the attacker.



Gaining Advantage

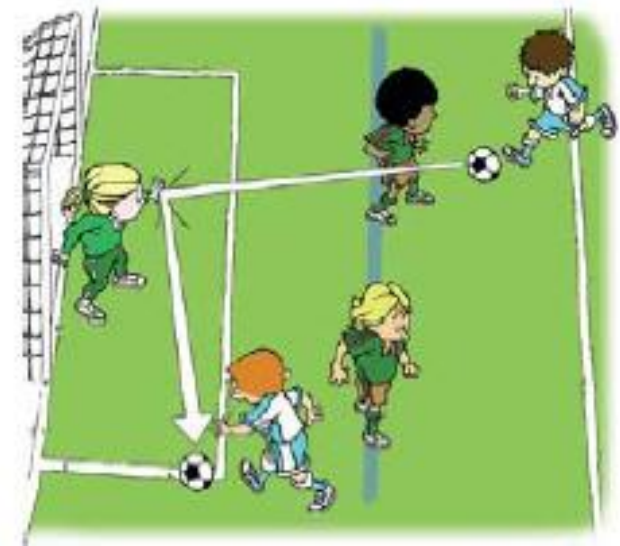


Gaining an advantage means touching a ball or interfering with an opponent after the ball rebounds off the goalpost, crossbar or opposing player.



Gaining Advantage

Gaining an advantage can also occur when the ball has been deliberately “saved” by an opponent.



A “save” is when a player stops a ball, which is going into or very close to the goal, by using any part of their body except the hands, unless the save is by the goalkeeper within their own penalty area.



Active Involvement

Active Involvement includes:

- Making contact with the ball
- Blocking path of an opponent
- Blocking vision or line of sight of an opponent
- Directly distracting or deceiving an opponent
- Touching a ball that rebounds from the goal or a deflects off a defender not in control of the ball





Active Involvement

Distracting or deceiving usually means that the attacker's movement affects an opponent by causing them to move into the area of active play to defend against or challenge the attacker.



An attacking player is still deemed to be involved in active play if the ball deflects off a defender who did not control or play the ball.



The Offside Offense



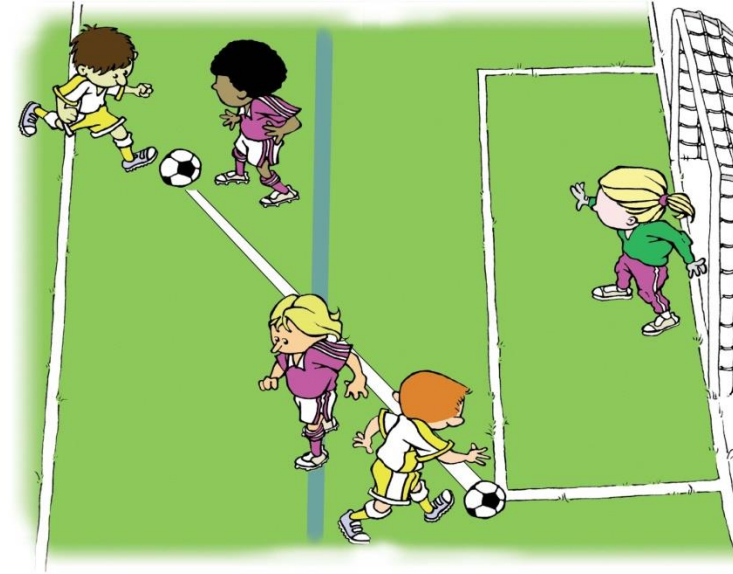
In order for a player to be penalized for an offside offense, all of the following criteria must be met.

- **Player must be in an offside position**
- **Player is in an offside position at the moment the ball touches or is played by a teammate**
- **Player becomes involved in active play in the opinion of the referee**



Offense

The attacking player is in an offside position because he is closer to the goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last defender, before the ball is played.



While in an offside position, a teammate plays the ball to him.

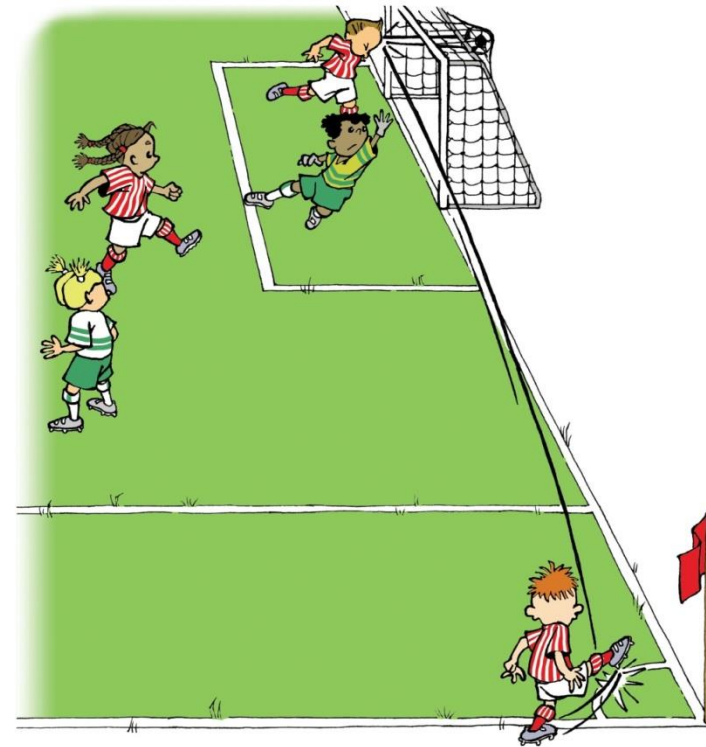
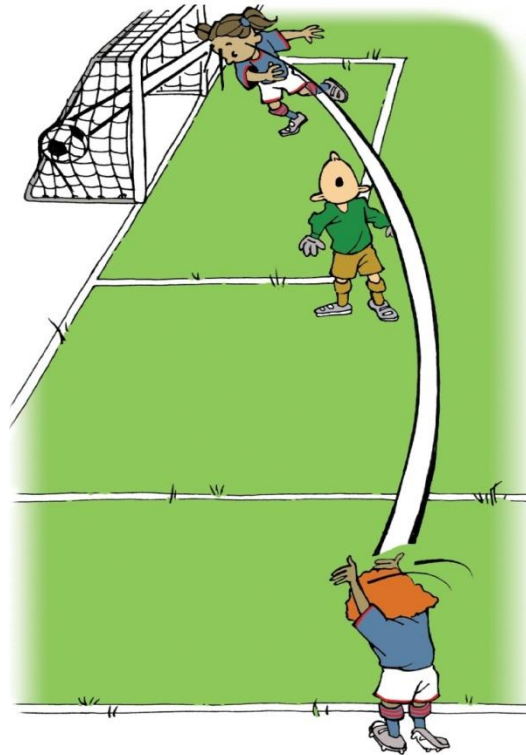
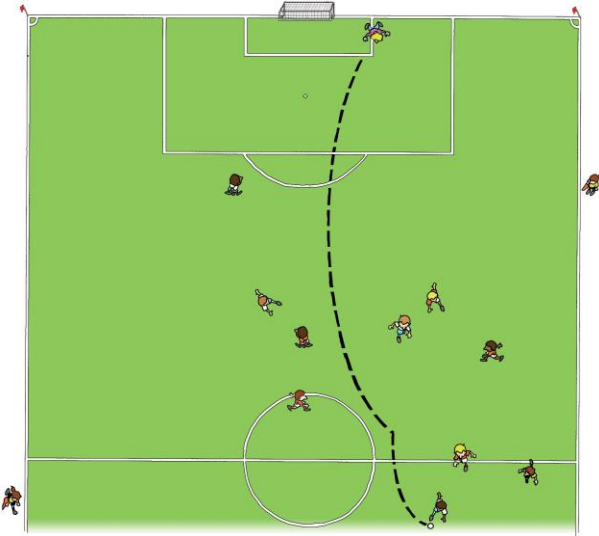
The player becomes involved in active play by touching the ball and should therefore be penalized for an offside offense.



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No Offense

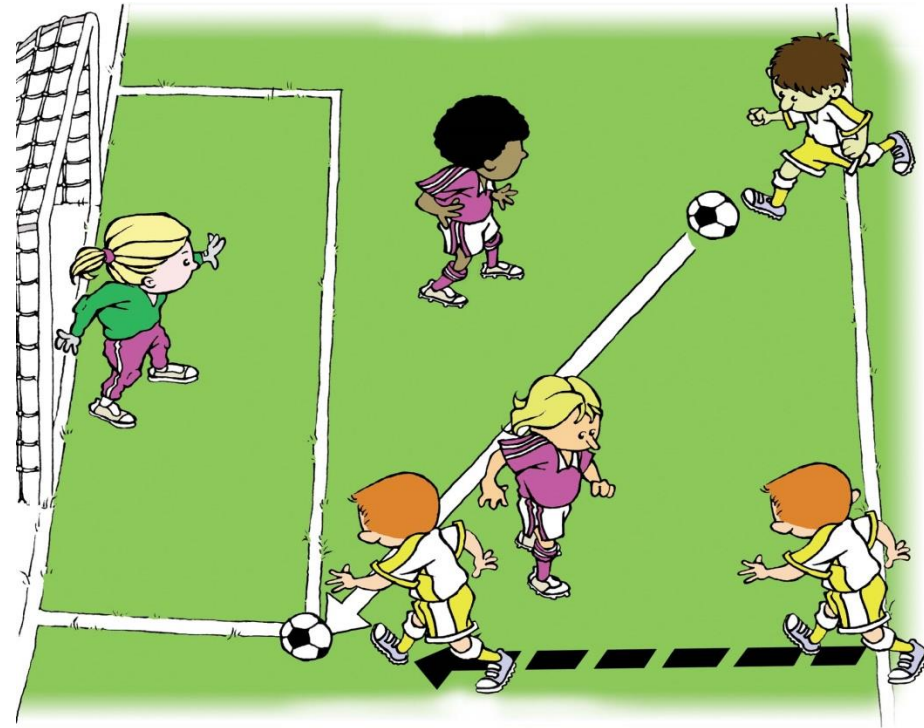


There is no offense if a player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, throw-in or corner kick.



No Offense

Although the attacking player receives the ball behind the second-to-last opponent, he was not in an offside position at the time the ball was played by his teammate so there is no offense.





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Determining Offside



When determining offside, there are three (3) questions that must be asked.

- 1) Was the attacker in an offside position?**
- 2) While in an offside position, did the attacker participate in active play?**
- 3) Did the attacker receive the ball directly from a throw-in, goal kick or corner kick?**



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Determining Offside



- 1) If the referee can't answer 'yes' to the first question, there is no need to ask the next questions.**
- 2) Likewise, if the referee can't answer 'yes' to the second question, there is no need to ask the third question.**
- 3) If the answer is 'no' to the third question, then there is an offside offense.**



Offside Duties

The primary duty of the ARs is to indicate when a player may be penalized for being in an offside position.



In order to do this, it is critical that the ARs maintain their position even with the second-to-last defender or the ball, whichever is closer to the goal line.



Offside Duties

ARs must also maintain total concentration and can't lose their focus on this duty.



Based on the information provided by the AR, the referee then makes the final decision on whether to stop the game and penalize the offside offense



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Restart

In the event of an offside offense, the referee awards an indirect free kick (IFK) to the opposing team to be taken from where the offside player touched the ball or where the offside player was when the offense was called, including if it in the player's own half of the field of play.





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Infringements



If a defender deliberately leaves the field of play in order to place an attacker in a offside position, the defender will be considered to be on the goal line or touchline at the point they left the field.



Infringements

The defender will be considered in this position for purposes of offside until the next stoppage in play or until the attacking team has lost possession of the ball.



Note: When the defender deliberately leaves the field in this situation, the defender **MUST be cautioned at the next stoppage in play.**



Infringements

An attacking player MAY step off the field of play in order to not be involved in active play.



Note: The attacker must ask for the referee's permission to re-enter the field. If the attacker re-enters the field and gains an unfair advantage the attacker MUST be cautioned .



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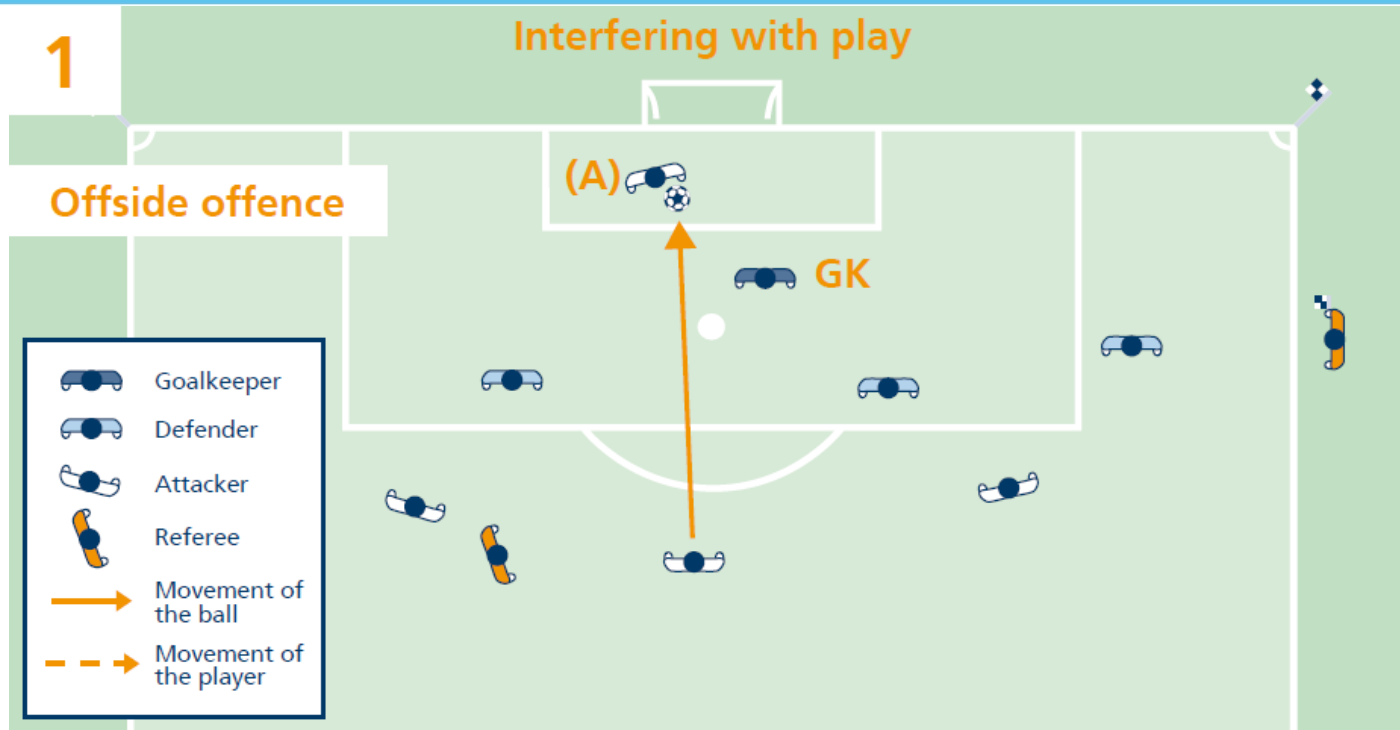
Examples

Review the following examples that demonstrate the various elements of Law 11.



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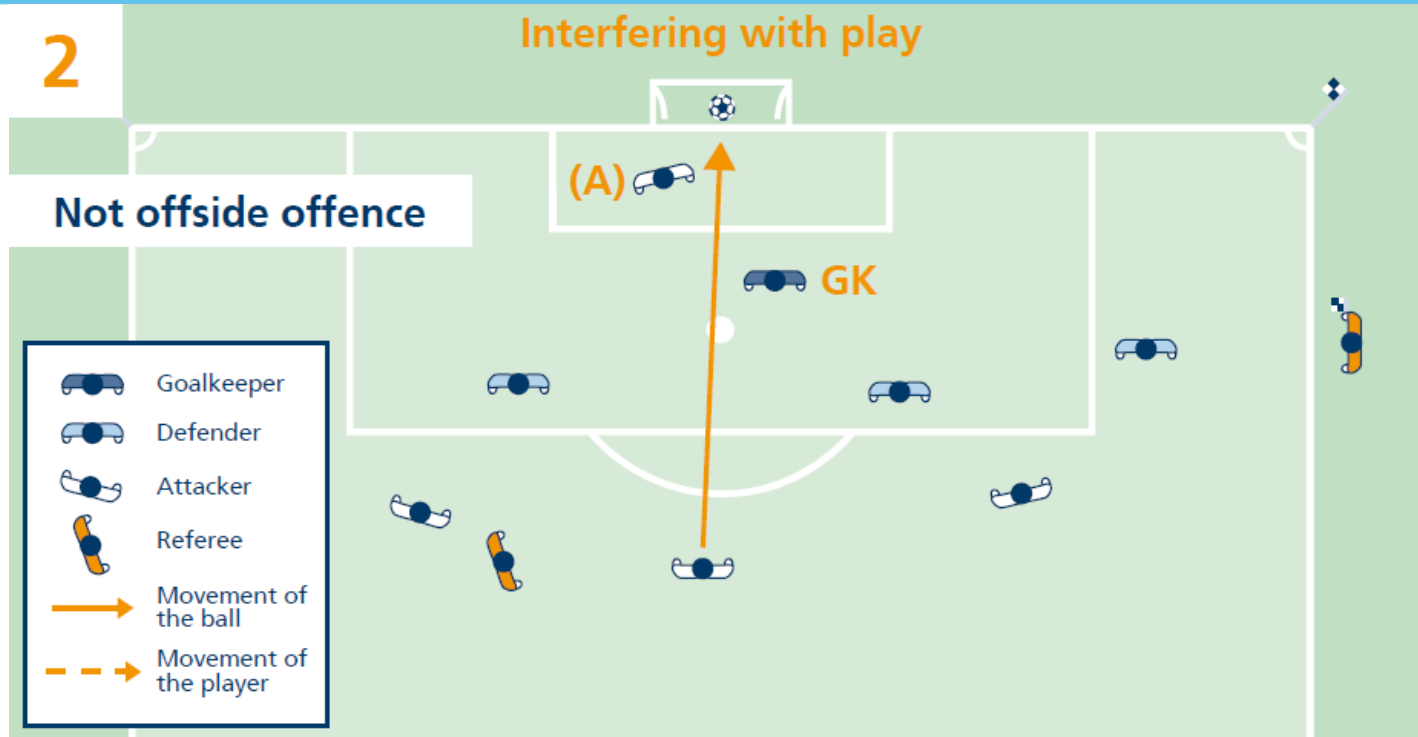
Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position, not interfering with an opponent, touches the ball.

The AR must raise the flag when the player touches the ball.

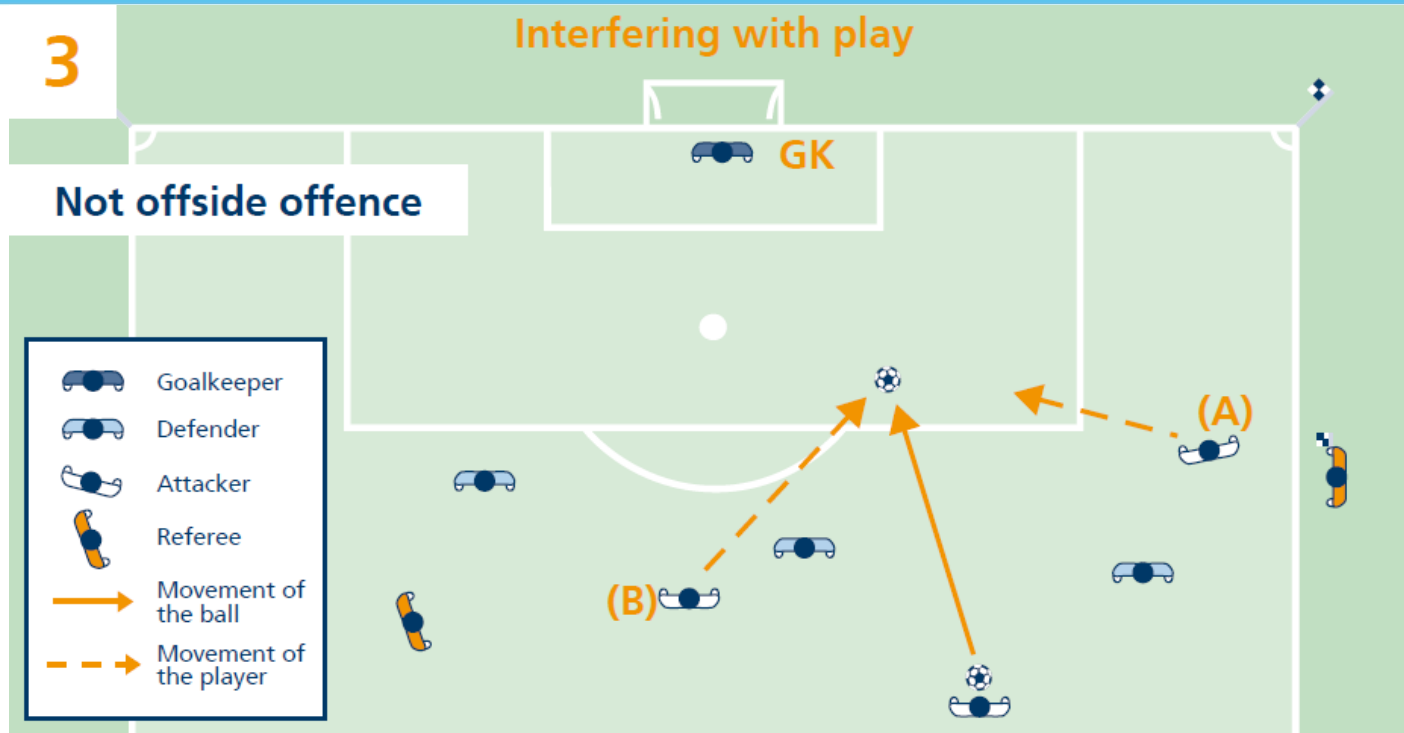
No Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position, not interfering with an opponent, does not touch the ball.

The player cannot be penalized because they did not touch the ball.

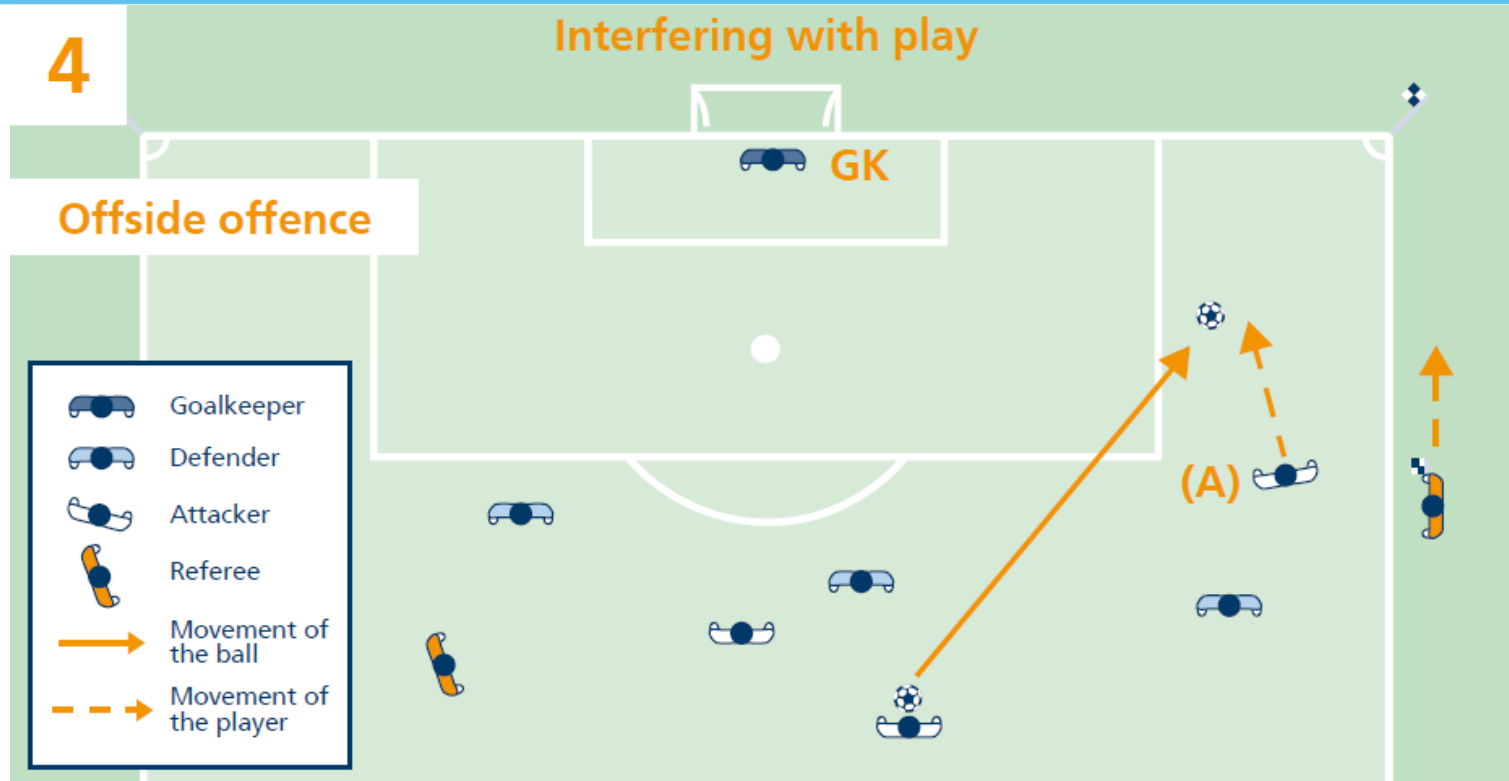
No Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position runs towards the ball and teammate (B) in an onside position also runs towards the ball and plays it.

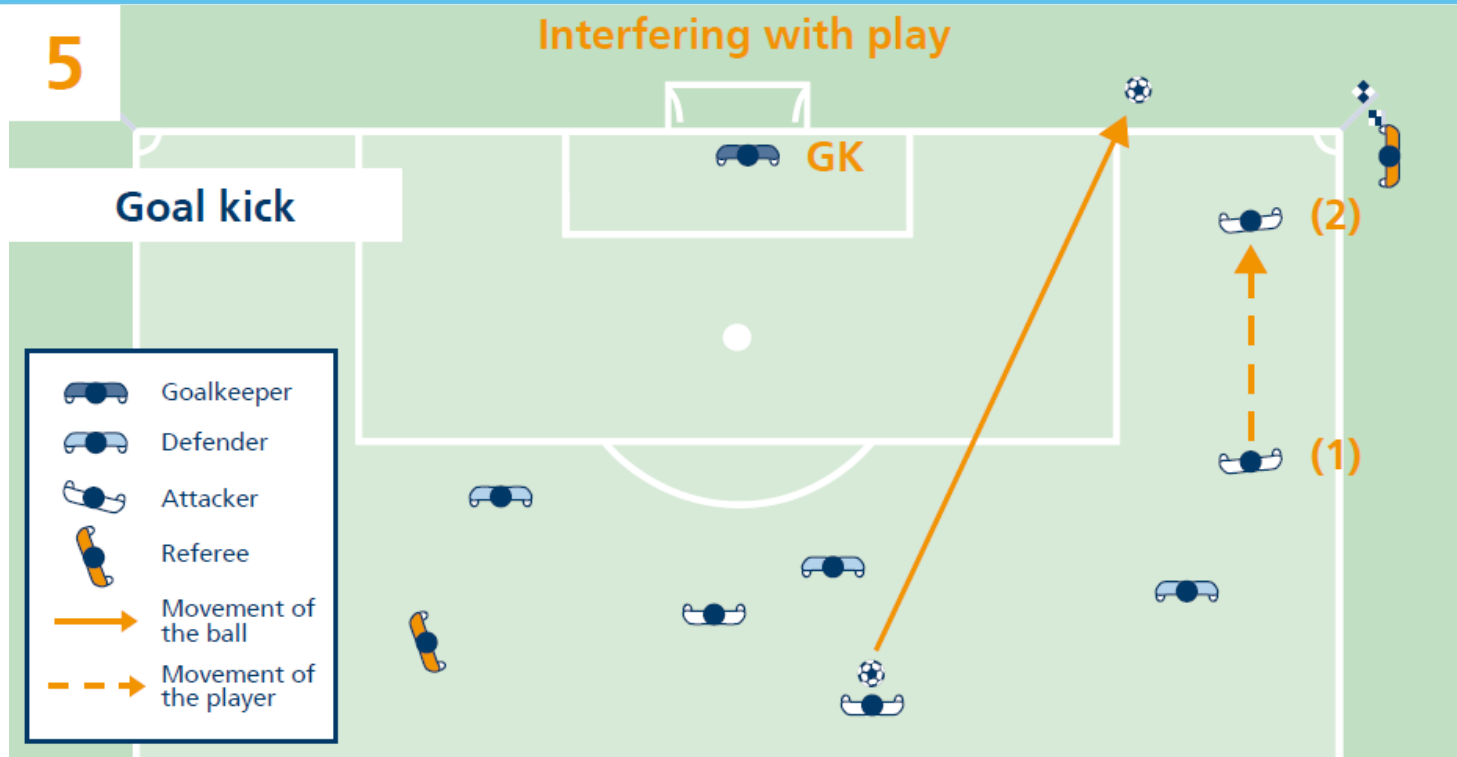
Attacker (A) cannot be penalized because they did not touch the ball.

Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position may be penalized before playing or touching the ball, if, in the opinion of the referee, no other teammate in an onside position has the opportunity to play the ball.

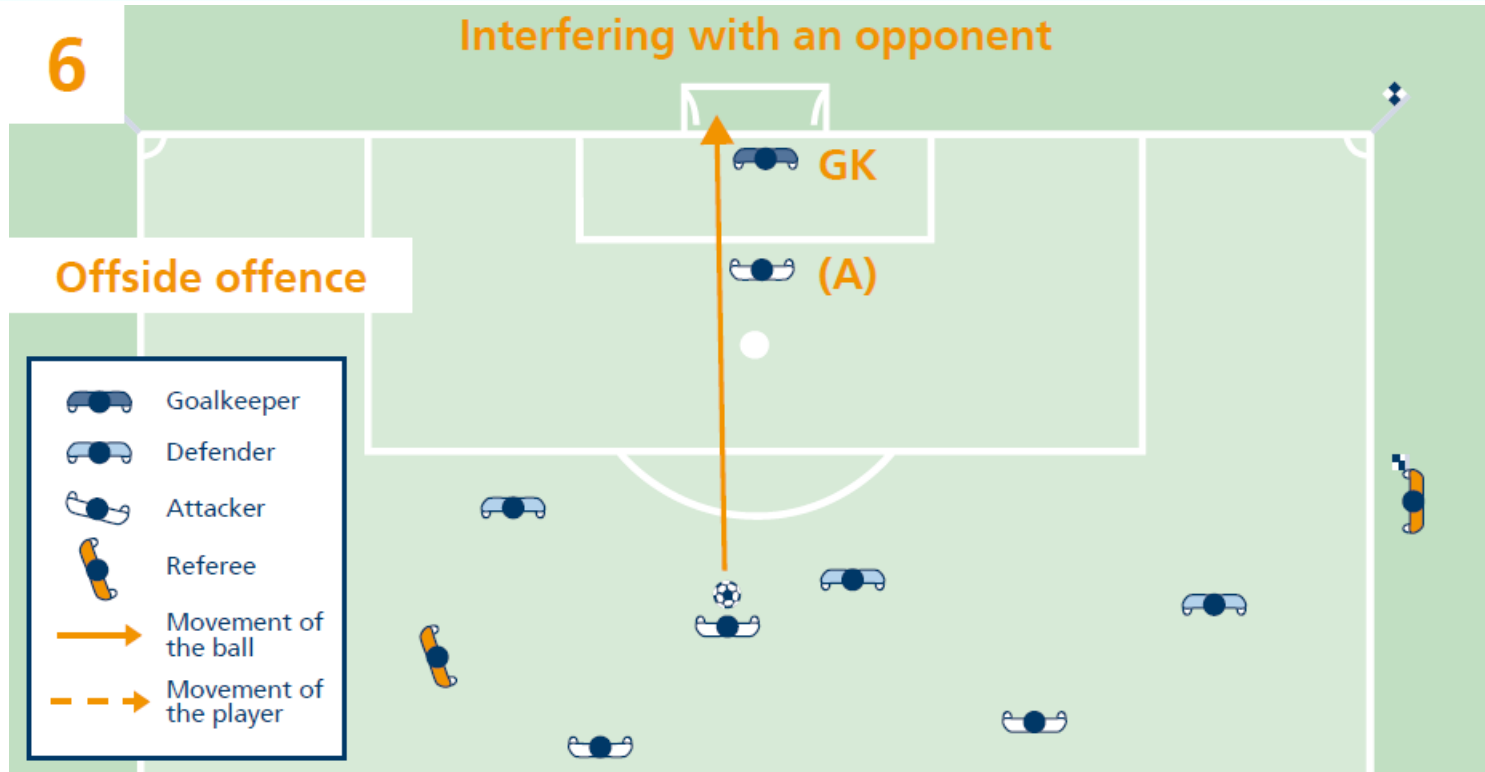
No Offense



An attacker in an offside position runs towards the ball and does not touch the ball.

The AR must signal for a goal kick.

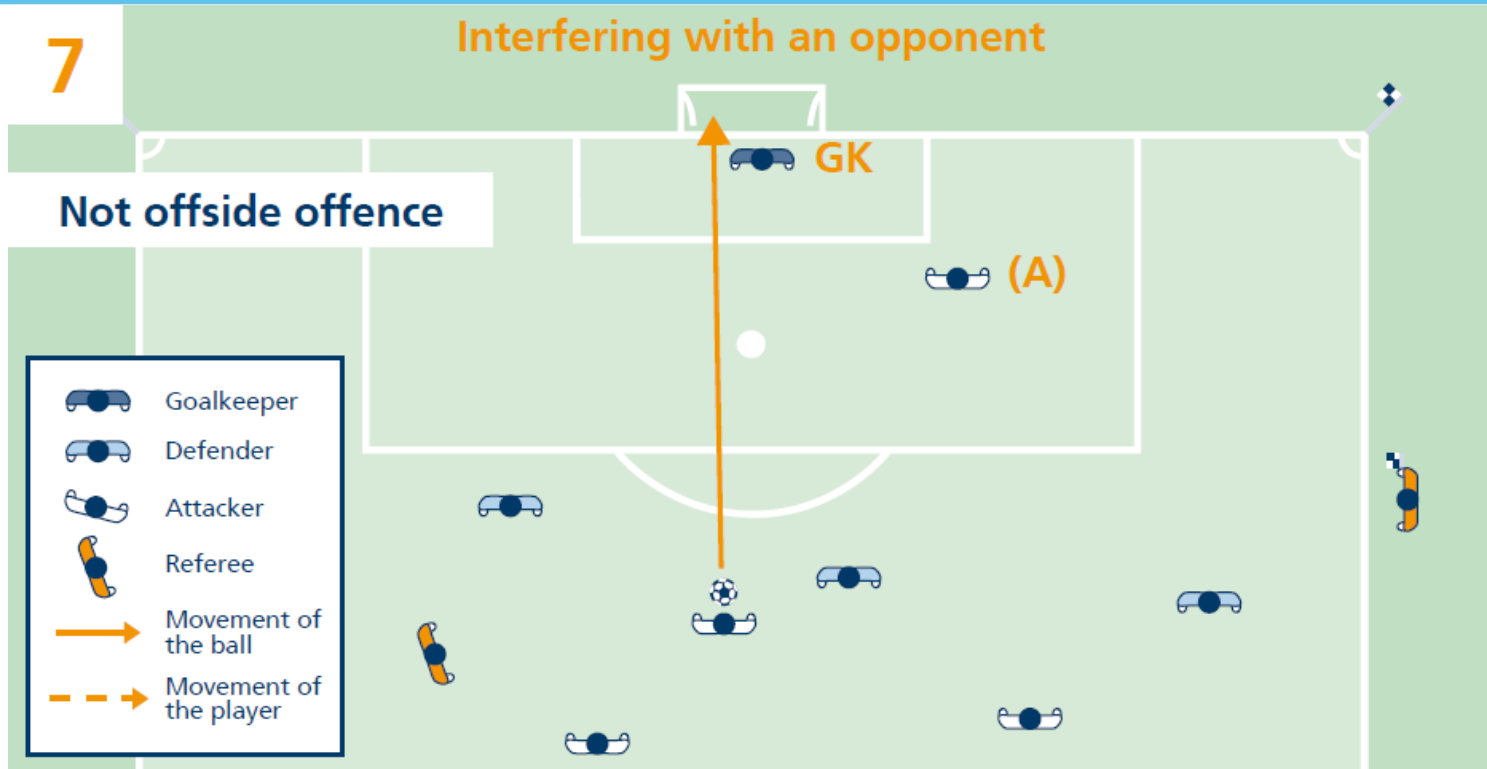
Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position is obstructing the goalkeeper's line of vision.

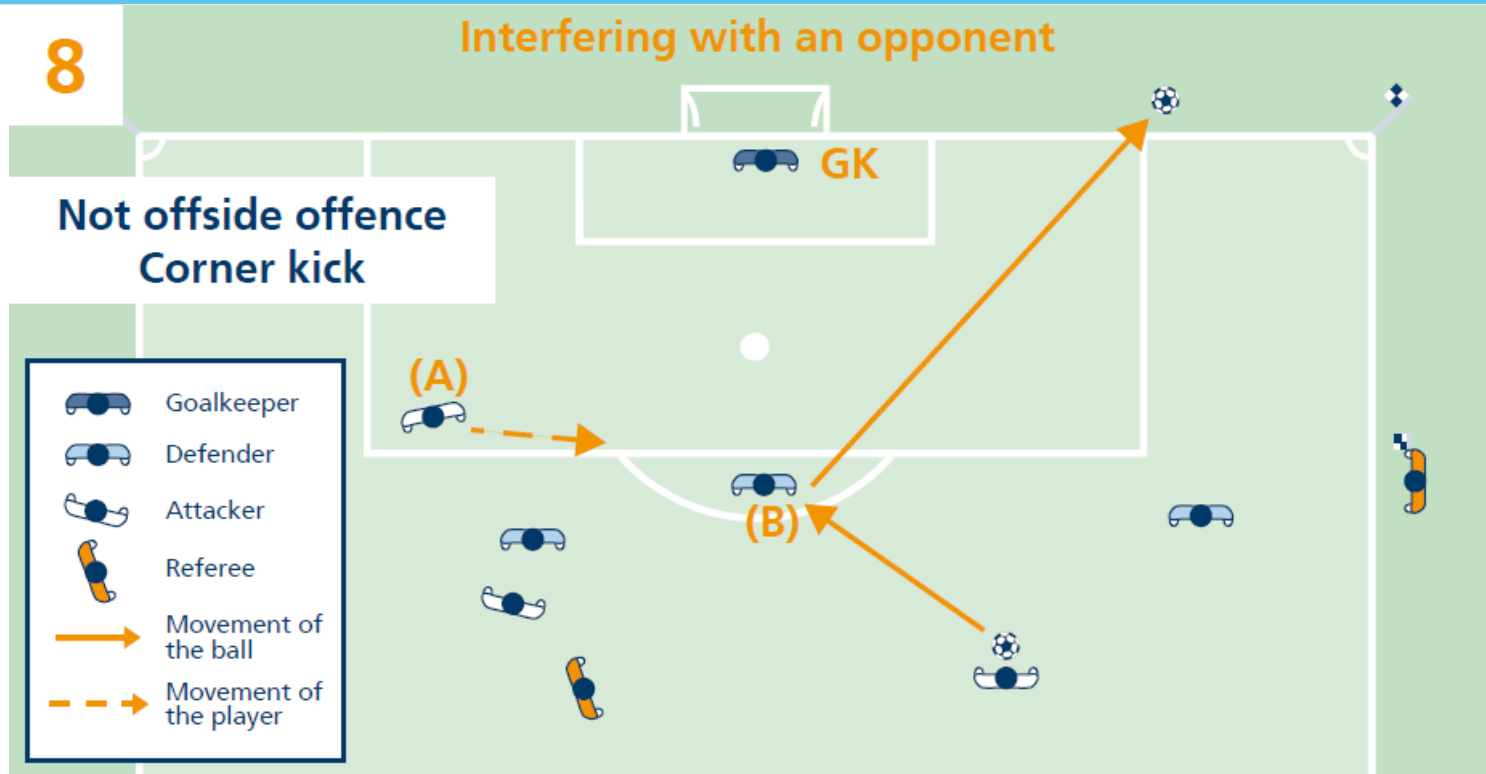
Attacker (A) must be penalized because they prevent an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball.

No Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position is not obstructing the goalkeeper's line of vision or challenging an opponent for the ball.

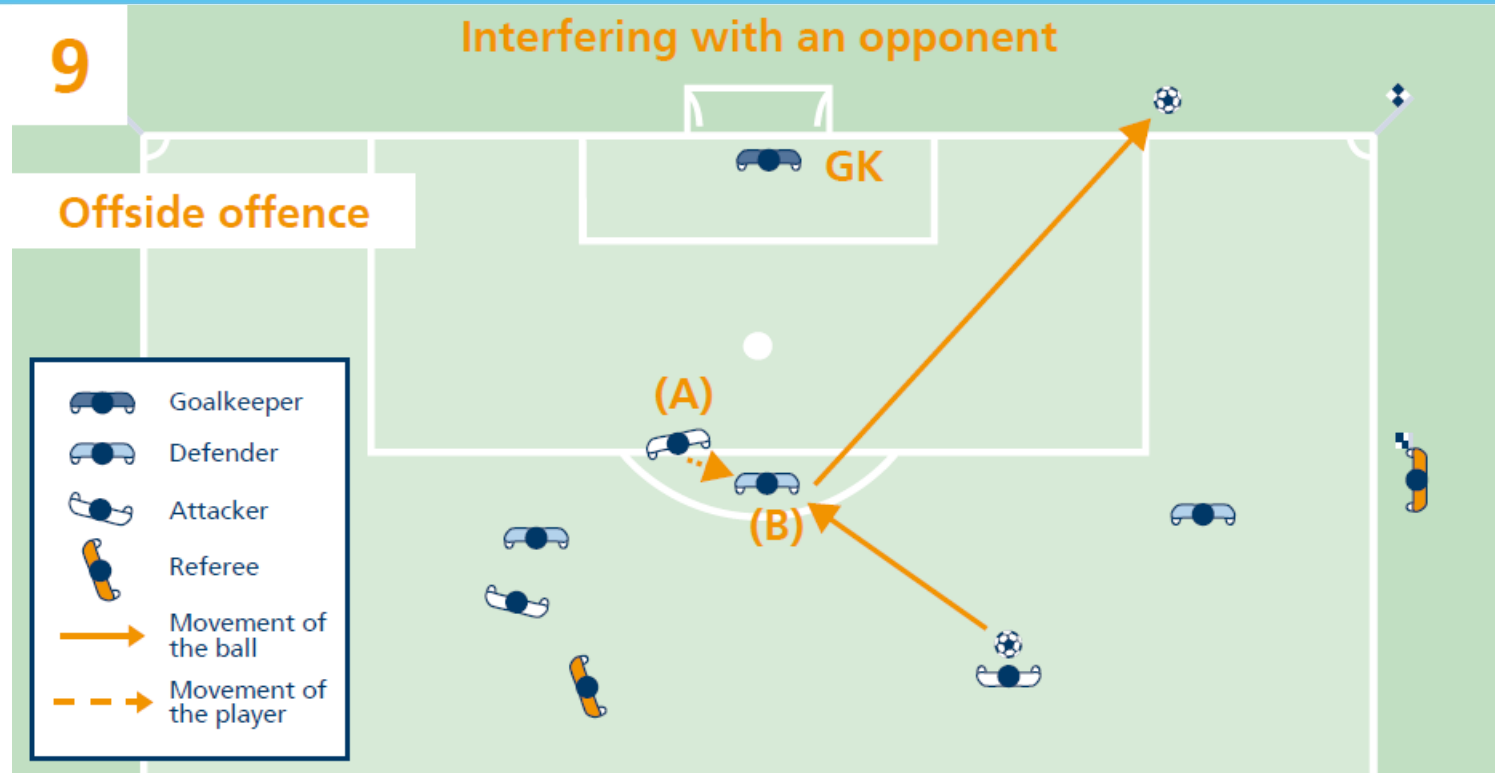
No Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position runs towards the ball but he or she does not prevent the opponent from playing or being able to play the ball.

Attacker (A) is not challenging opponent (B) for the ball.

Offense



Attacker (A) in an offside position runs towards the ball preventing opponent (B) from playing or being able to play the ball by challenging the opponent for the ball.

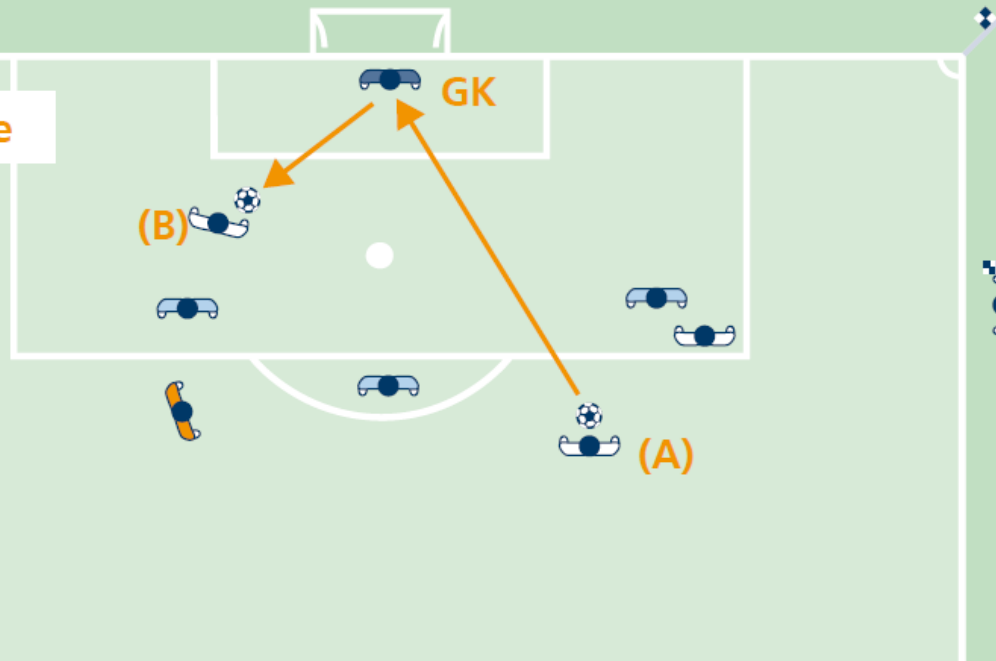
Attacker (A) is challenging opponent (B) for the ball.

Offense

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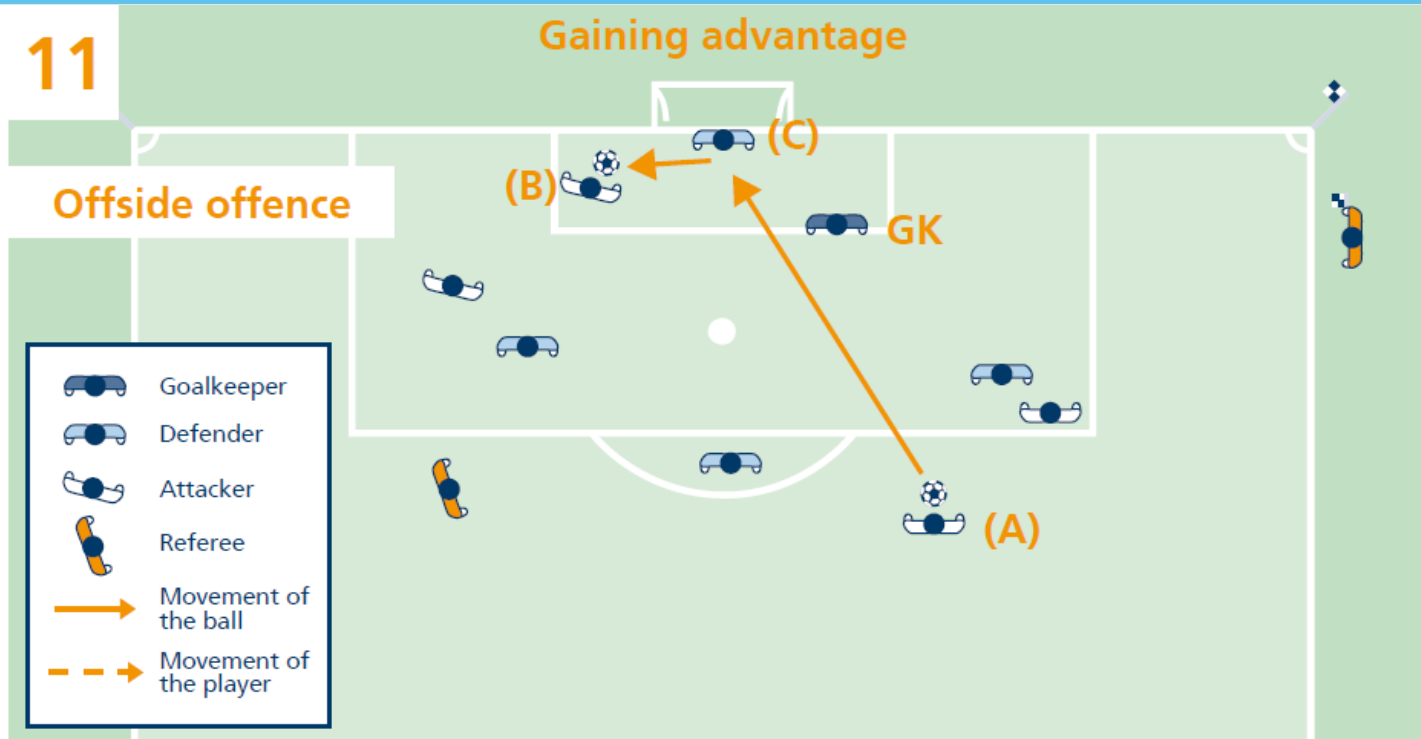
Gaining advantage

Offside offence



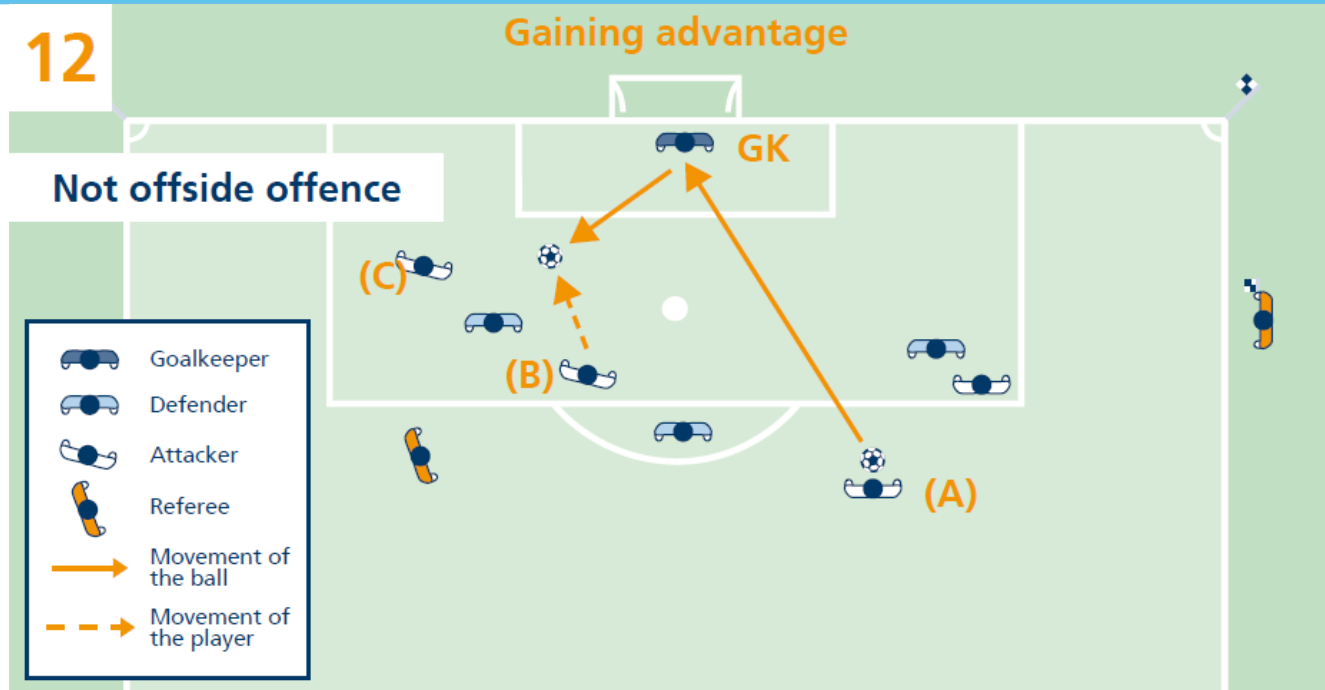
Attacker (B) in an offside position is penalized for playing or touching the ball that rebounds, is deflected or is played to him or her from a deliberate save by the goalkeeper having been in an offside position when the ball was last touched or is played by a teammate.

Offense



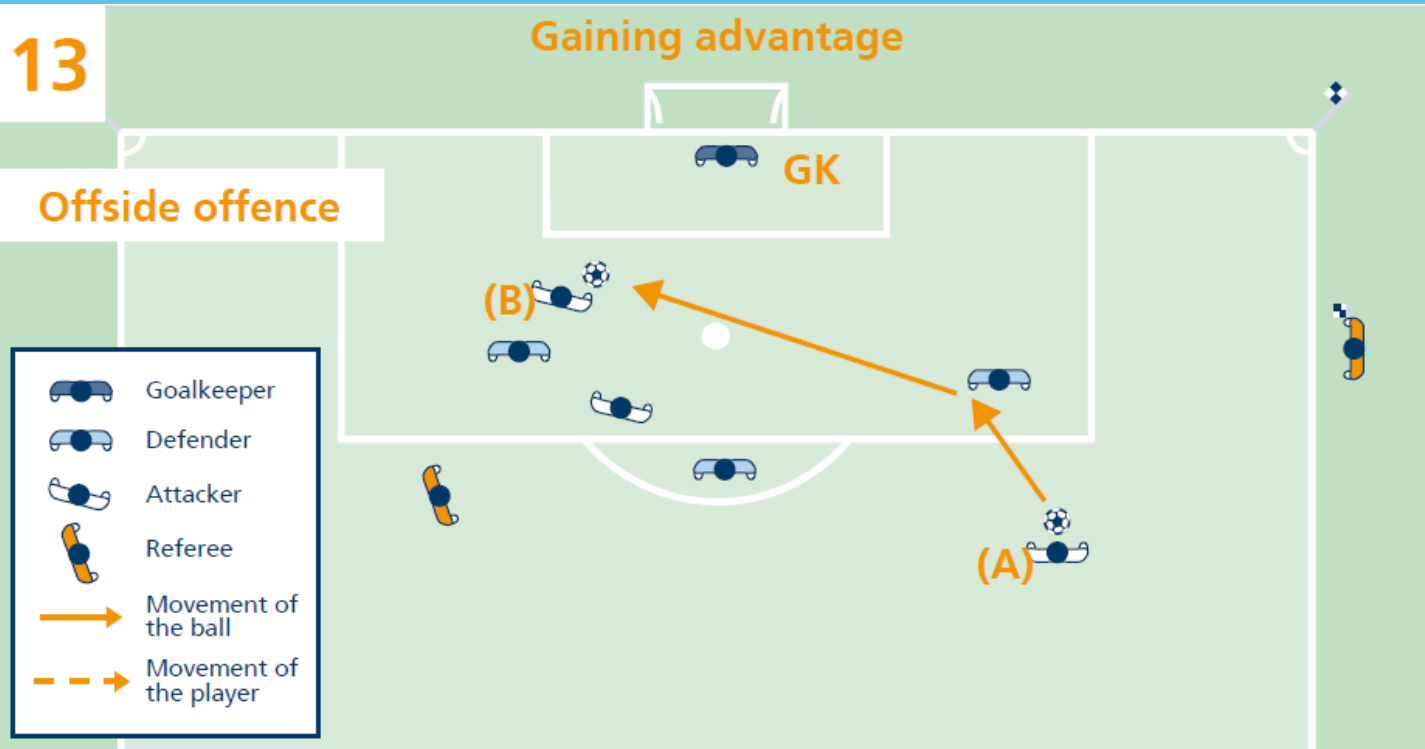
Attacker (B) in an offside position is penalized for playing or touching the ball that rebounds, is deflected or is played to them from a deliberate save by defender (C) having been in an offside position when the ball was last touched or played by a teammate.

No Offense



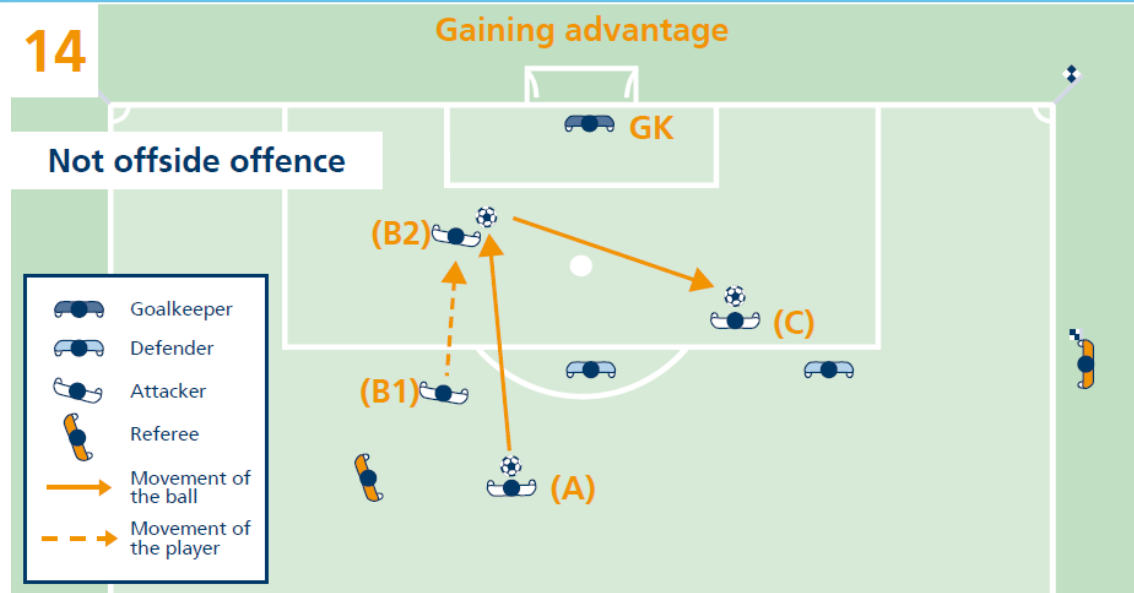
The shot by attacker (A) rebounds from the goalkeeper. Attacker (B) is in an onside position and plays the ball. Attacker (C) in an offside position is not penalized because they did not gain an advantage from being in that position because they did not touch the ball.

Offense



The shot by attacker (A) rebounds off or is deflected by an opponent to attacker (B) who is penalized for playing or touching the ball having previously been in an offside position.

No Offense



Attacker (C) is in an offside position, not interfering with an opponent, when teammate (A) passes the ball to player (B) in an onside position who runs towards the opponents' goal and passes the ball to teammate (C).

Attacker (C) cannot be penalized because when the ball was passed to them, they were in an onside position.



Review Question

53. An attacking player, in an offside position, receives the ball directly from an opponent's direct free kick (DFK). Is the player guilty of an offside offense?

- A. Yes
- B. No



Review Question

54. An attacking player, in an offside position, receives the ball directly from a teammate's indirect free kick (IFK). Is the player guilty of an offside offense?

- A. Yes
- B. No



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Review Question

55. An attacking player, in an offside position, receives the ball directly from an opponent's goal kick. Is the player guilty of an offside offense?

- A. Yes
- B. No



Review Question

56. An attacking player, in an offside position, receives the ball from a teammate's pass after it bounces off the back of a defender. Is the player guilty of an offside offense?

- A. Yes
- B. No



Review Question

57. To be in an offside position, a player must be which of the following?

- A. Nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball
- B. Nearer to the opponent's goal line than the second-to-last defender
- C. In the opponent's half of the field
- D. All of the above



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Review Question



58. Should a player always be penalized for being in an offside position?

A. Yes

B. No



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Review Question

59. Does a player have to be in an offside position and involved in active play to be punished for an offside offense?

- A. Yes
- B. No



Review Question

60. A player cannot be punished for being offside position if the ball is received directly from which of the following?

- A. Corner kick
- B. Goal kick
- C. Throw-in
- D. All of the above



Review Question

61. A player cannot be in an offside position if he or she is _____.

- A. even with the second-to-last opponent
- B. even with the assistant referee
- C. ahead of the ball
- D. Not ahead of the assistant referee



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Review Question



62. A player in a offside position is only penalized for an offside offense if _____.

- A. that player is involved in active play
- B. that player received the ball directly from a goal kick
- C. that player received the ball directly from a throw-in



Review Question

63. An attacking player, in an offside position, receives the ball directly from a teammate's corner kick. Is the player guilty of an offside offense?

- A. Yes
- B. No