



# Official Laws of the Game

2025/2026

Issue 08





Issue History		
Issue	Date	Comments
01	03/2021	Origination of Document
02	03/2021	Modified Law 10 to include Mercy Rule, provided clarity to Appendix A, and added Appendix B - Weather and Field Condition Policy
03	04/2021	Clarified Law 10 for where a goal can be scored from and provided more explanation to Law 5 for the substitution process for an injured player. Adopted this Reference Book as the Official PDSA Laws of the Game.
04	08/2021	Added Appendix C – Complex Game Field Layout. Adopted 21/22 IFAB Laws of the Game. Modified Appendix B - Weather Policy, Law 3 for # of Players, and Law 7 Match Duration
05	02/2023	Added Appendix C - Regular Season Standings and Tournament Seedings Adopted 22/23 IFAB Laws of the Game. Updated divisions to include U12/U14/U17 Added clarifications for Law 7, Law 15, Law 16, Appendix A, Appendix B
06	08/2023	Adopted IFAB 23/24 Laws of the Game. Added clarification for Law 1, Law 8, Law 12
07	01/2025	Updated to include U18, and IFAB laws of the game 24/25  Added to: Law 3 – “Play down”,  Law 4 – clarification,  Law 7 – Forfeit, Reschedule, and Game Delay,  Law 8 – U6 & U8 kickoff and indirect free kick clarification,  Law 10 – Mercy Rule ends field time for tournament games,

		<p>Law 11 – Link to IFAB, &amp; clarification on who makes calls,</p> <p>Law 12 – Link to IFAB, header rule, direct and indirect free kick clarification,</p> <p>Law 14 – Updated to agree with IFAB ball on PK spot “may touch or overhang”</p> <p>Law 16 – U6 &amp; U8 specified “not the goal box”</p> <p>Appendix A – specified two “consecutive” halves</p> <p>Appendix B – Updated Weather Policy – See WBGT.</p> <p>Appendix C – Clarification on Tournament standings and games</p>
08	07/2025	<p>Law 4 – Updated to agree with IFAB, goalkeeper “pinny”.</p> <p>Law 8 – Clarified, center circle rule and added dropped ball link for IFAB</p> <p>Law 11 – Updated Link</p> <p>Law 12 – Updated Link and added section on Goalkeeper - 8 seconds rule.</p>

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## Purpose

The purpose of this book is to provide a summary of the modified International Football Association Board (IFAB) Laws of the Game which each division will compete under within Palo Duro Soccer Association (PDSA). PDSA has adopted the *Laws of the Game 25/26* published by IFAB as its official ruling in areas that are not expound upon within this book. **This book is subject to change to provide clarification, if needed, throughout a given season.** “Major” changes will only be applied during off season times unless the change is warranted due to safety concerns or to maintain fair play. **Please ensure you reference the most current issue of the PDSA Official Laws of the Game.** A current issue of the PDSA Official Laws of the Game can be found at [www.palodurosoccer.com](http://www.palodurosoccer.com) or by contacting the Referee Coordinator.

## Roles and Responsibilities

It is important to remember that PDSA is a recreational soccer association developed to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all skill levels. Matches are friendly competitions among friends and family. There are specific roles and responsibilities that Match Officials, Coaches, and Spectators are to uphold for the success of PDSA. Please respect each other and keep a conflict-free environment. If a conflict arises with an Official, Coach, or Spectator, please contact a PDSA Board Member to handle the situation. If necessary, Canyon PD will be notified to aid in conflict resolution.

## Modifications of the Laws of the Game

### Law 1 – The Field of Play

Division	U6	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
Location	Fields 3-5	Fields 6-7a	Fields 1-2	Field 8	Field 8	TBD
Corner Flag Post	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Halfway Flag Post	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Coaches should remain in the area between the halflines and the top of the penalty area that corresponds with the player's bench. This coach's area may or may not be marked on the sideline. For U8 the coaches should remain between the halflines and the corner arc.

Exceptions for U6 one coach may be on the field with the players throughout the whole duration of the game.

### Law 2 – The Ball

PDSA approved match ball:

Division	U6	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
Size	3	3	4	5	5	5

## Law 3 – The Players

Each player shall play a minimum of 50% of game time:

Division	U6	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
# of Players	3v3 <sup>1</sup>	4v4 <sup>1</sup>	9v9 <sup>1</sup>	9v9 <sup>1</sup>	8v8 <sup>1</sup>	TBD <sup>1</sup>
# of Subs		Unlimited				
Substitute Procedure	Anytime	Stoppage in Play <sup>2</sup>				
Goalkeeper	None	None	Yes <sup>3</sup>			

<sup>1</sup> Subject to change based on final player count. Check with the Commissioner or Referee Coordinator after rosters have been sent out. To “field a team” is to place the minimum number of players set by PDSA. A team may only “play down” up to 1 player or reduce the number of players on the field if both coaches and the center referee agree to the change of player number. Playing down is only expected if a team does not have enough players to field a full team and not for convenience in subbing players. The change is made at the beginning of the game or during a quarter or half-time break. Exceptions are made for injuries which happen during play. In the spirit of the game and to promote good sportsmanship, both coaches should play down to match the opposing team’s number of fielded players.

<sup>2</sup> Teams can sub on either team's goal kick, goal, caution, or injury. Additionally, a team may sub on its own corner kick or throw-in. If the team with the corner kick or throw-in subs, the opposing team can sub as well. Substitutes are to wait at the midfield point. The referee must summon the players on. An unlimited number of substitutes may be made at half time without alerting the referee.

If a player is injured and the coach must enter the field, the injured player is to leave the field of play and may only re-enter after the play has restarted following proper substitution procedure as outlined above.

<sup>3</sup> Any of the players may change places with the goalkeeper if:

- the referee is informed before the change is made,
- the change is made during a stoppage in play.

## Law 4 – The Players' Equipment

No jewelry, except for small, studded earrings, may be worn unless approved by the Referee Coordinator or Board Member. Small, studded earrings may be worn if covered with tape or the equivalent.

Casts and braces that are hard or have hard material showing must be approved by a Board Member, Commissioner, or Referee Coordinator. Hard surfaces must be covered by a padding or other protective layer approved by PDSA.

Required equipment:

- Shirt with sleeves
- Shorts or athletic pants – (No Jeans)
- Socks
- Shin guards – these must be of a suitable material and size to provide reasonable protection and covered by the socks
- Closed toe footwear – (No Toe Cleat, No Boots)

Goalkeepers may wear tracksuit bottoms and gloves.

The two teams must wear colors that distinguish them from each other and the match officials.

Each goalkeeper must wear colors that are distinguishable from the other players and the match officials. If goalkeeper does not have a colored top that is distinguishable from both his own team and the opposing team, as well as from the referees, a “pinny” or target jersey must be worn. The “pinny” or target jersey may be the same color as the opposite team’s goalkeeper’s “pinny”.

## **Law 5 – The Referee (PDSA Certified)**

Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the PDSA Official Laws of the Game in connection with the match.

Decisions will be made to the best of the referee's ability according to the PDSA Official Laws of the Game and the 'spirit of the game' and will be based on the opinion of the referee.

The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether a goal is scored and the result of the match, are final once the match score card has been signed. The decisions of the referee, and all other match officials, must always be respected.

**Discrepancies with a match official's performance or the match outcome are to be directed to the Referee Coordinator and not the match official.**

The Referee's Powers and Duties are to conform with the adopted *Laws of the Game* with the exception that in a case where play is stopped by the referee due to a serious injury that requires a coach's attention.

## **Law 6 – The Other Match Officials (PDSA Certified)**

Assistant referees will be used whenever possible for U10 – U18 matches.

A video assistance referee or any other source of videography will not be used to make match decisions.

## Law 7 – Duration of the Match

Division	U6	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
Q1	8 min.	10 min.	25 min.	30 min.	30 min.	30 min.
Break	2 min.	2 min.				
Q2	8 min.	10 min.				
Half-Time	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.
Q3	8 min.	10 min.	25 min.	30 min.	30 min.	30 min.
Break	2 min.	2 min.				
Q4	8 min.	10 min.				

**Note:** All game times are subject to change based on final player count and weather conditions. Check with the Commissioner or Referee Coordinator after rosters have been sent out or during extreme weather conditions. See Appendix B – Weather and Field Condition Policy for additional Weather Policy details. Game length may be adjusted, if deemed necessary, due to impending weather or diminished visibility.

Added time will not be applied to each half to account for time lost during play stoppages.

### Forfeit and Reschedule

Should a team need to reschedule a game they must make a request through their commissioner at least 24 hours in advance, less than 24 hours will result in a forfeit. The rescheduled game must be agreed upon by the Commissioner, Board and Opposing team. Forfeit automatically sets the score at 3-0 with 3 being the winner, and 0 being the forfeiter. If a team cannot field a team and does not provide the commissioner 24-hour notice prior to the game, the game is considered a forfeit.

For rescheduling due to weather conditions speak with a Commissioner and/or the PDSA Board. See also Weather Policy (pg. 20).

### Game Delay

A game may be delayed 10 minutes if a team does not have enough players to start the game. Any delayed time must be subtracted from total play time; the game end time will not be extended. After 10 minutes if the team still does not have enough players to begin, they shall forfeit the game. A team without an adult

coach will not be allowed to play. In this case, the game will be considered a forfeit, and the forfeiter is the team without a coach.

## **Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play**

### **Kick-off Procedure**

The team that wins Rock, Paper, Scissors faceoff or Coin Flip decides which goal to attack in the first half or takes the kick-off.

Depending on the above, their opponent takes the kick-off or decides which goal to attack in the first half.

The team that decided which goal to attack in the first half takes the kick-off to start the second half.

Teams change ends and attack the opposite goals for the second half.

For every kick-off, all players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play. (Meaning that all players could be in the center circle but only the kicker is permitted to enter the other half of the field if they should choose.) The opposing team must be outside of the center circle until the ball is in play.

If the player taking the kick-off touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick, or for a handball offence, a direct free kick is awarded.

### **U6 and U8 Only:**

Conform to the above with the exception that a goal may NOT be scored from a kick-off, if the ball should enter the goal in this manner a goal kick should be awarded. Indirect free kicks are awarded for handballs and all other offences. See Law 12 for Fouls and Misconduct.

See IFAB for Dropped ball rules and procedure:

<https://www.theifab.com/laws/latest/the-start-and-restart-of-play/#dropped-ball>

## **Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play**

A ball out of play must wholly pass over the goal line or touchline on the ground or in the air.

If the ball touches a match official, remains on the field of play and a promising attack, goal, or possession change occurs, the ball is deemed out of play and a drop ball is awarded.

## **Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match**

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line. A goal may be scored from any point on the field. See Laws 8 and 13-17 for other methods of scoring.

Overtime only applies to Tournament Matches and will follow the procedure outlined in Appendix A – Match Overtime.

### **Mercy Rule:**

The match is suspended when more than one half of the game is complete, and a team has scored more than eight goals over its opponents. At this point, the game becomes a scrimmage with a match official officiating. Teams may exchange players to balance play, stop play at any time to address learning points, and/or modify the scrimmage in any agreed upon manner.

### **U6 and U8 Only:**

Conform to the above with the exceptions:

No player may touch the ball within the goal box; however, any player may move through the goal box. If any part of the ball or player's body is on or across the line, it is considered in the goal box; the player is an extension of the box.

If a defender touches the ball in the goal box, a goal is awarded to the offensive team. If the defender OR the ball is in the box and contact is made, a goal is awarded.

If an offensive player touches the ball within the goal box, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.

If the ball comes to a complete stop in the goal box, regardless of which team touched it last, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.

### **For U6 only:**

There will be no Own Goals awarded. If a defensive team intentionally kicks the ball into their own goal, a corner kick will be awarded to the offensive team. If a ball bounces off or touches a defensive player that is intentionally kicked by the offensive team, a goal will be awarded to the offensive team.

## Law 11 – Offside

Division	U6	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
Offside	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Refer to the IFAB *Laws of the Game* or contact the Referee Coordinator for offside ruling.

<https://www.theifab.com/laws/latest/offside/>

If an offside offence occurs, the referee awards an indirect free kick where the offence occurred.

The Assistant Referee and the Head Referee are responsible for determining offsides and will make this call to the best of their ability.

## Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Refer to the IFAB *Laws of the Game* for details.

<https://www.theifab.com/laws/latest/fouls-and-misconduct/>

**\*\*** Any player or coach that is awarded a red card for a sending-off offence or an accumulation of two yellow cards for cautionary offences will be required to leave the match and the field area. The send-off also results in a one-match suspension to be served during their team's next scheduled match.

All red card suspensions will be reviewed by the Match Official, Referee Coordinator, and PDSA Board of Directors prior to the team's next scheduled match. **\*\***

Clock should not be stopped due to injury regardless of severity.

PDSA is not adopting IFAB's Temporary Dismissal rules.

### **Direct Free Kick**

A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits an offence against/makes contact with an opponent in a manner considered to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force (see IFAB laws of the game for definitions and further clarifications). Handballs are direct free kicks.

(PDSA is not adopting IFAB's rule on non-deliberate handballs preventing a goal/promising attack.)

### **Indirect Free Kick**

An indirect free kick is awarded if a player commits a lesser offence, these include but are not limited to when a player impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made, is guilty of dissent – using offensive or abusive language, or prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from the hands or kick or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it.

Please refer to the IFAB Laws of the Game for more details and specifications.

Headers are not allowed in PDSA and intentionally heading the ball will be awarded with an Indirect free kick.

### **U6 and U8 Only:**

All fouls result in an indirect free kick and the offence must be explained to the offending player. No cards are awarded for misconduct.

### **Goalkeeper:**

A goalkeeper who controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds will be penalized with a corner kick being awarded to the other team.

Indirect free kicks are awarded if a goalkeeper touches the ball with the hand/arm after it has been deliberately passed back from a team-mate or has been thrown in by a team-mate.

## **Law 13 – Free Kicks**

If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal is awarded.

If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.

If a direct or indirect free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded.

A wall may be used to defend a free kick, however the distance from the ball for U6 and U8 is 4 yards and 8 yards for U10 and up.

### **U6 and U8 Only:**

If a free kick is awarded near the goal box, the ball is to be placed 4 yards away from the goal box line directly away from the goal.

## **Law 14 – The Penalty Kick (U10/U12/U14/U18)**

A penalty kick is awarded if a player commits a direct free kick offence inside of the penalty area. A goal may be scored from a penalty kick.

The ball must be stationary on the penalty mark. The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line until the ball has been kicked. The players other than the kicker and goalkeeper must be:

- at least 10 yds from the penalty mark,
- behind the penalty mark,
- inside the field of play,
- outside the penalty area.

The ball must move forward when kicked and the kicker may not touch the ball again until touched by another player.

## Law 15 – The Throw-In

A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in:

- if the ball enters the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.
- if the ball enters the thrower's goal, a corner kick is awarded.

The moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:

- stand facing the field of play,
- have part of each foot on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline,
- throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head from the point where it left the field of play.

The ball must touch another player before being touched again by the thrower.

One "mulligan" will be granted per game to each team, allowing them to retake an illegal throw-in. In U8, this mulligan will be granted throughout the season unless agreed upon by coaches, commissioner, and referee coordinator. In all divisions U10 & above, the mulligan will only be granted during each team's first game of the season.

### **U6 Only:**

Instead of throw-ins, kick-ins are awarded. The kicker must place the ball on or outside of the touchline and play the ball onto the field of play. The ball must touch another player before being touched again by the kicker.

Mulligans are unlimited and are to be given all season long – no limit to number of mulligans given per team or game.

## **Law 16 – The Goal Kick**

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team, and a goal is not scored. A goal may be scored from a goal kick.

The ball must be placed at any point within the goal area.

Opponents must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The goal kick does not have to leave the penalty area prior to being touched by either team.

### **U6 and U8 Only:**

Conform to the above with the exceptions of:

- the ball must be placed anywhere on the goal line, not the goal box
- the opponents must be on their own half of the field until the ball is in play.

## **Law 17 – The Corner Kick**

A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team, and a goal is not scored.

Corner flag post must not be moved or held by referees during corner kick.

The ball must be placed in the corner area nearest to the point where the ball passed over the goal line.

## Appendix A – Match Overtime

Should normal time end in a tie, there shall be two consecutive, five-minute halves alternating sides as normal time did. Both five-minute halves shall be played to completion regardless of the score at the end of the first overtime. If the match remains tied after the two halves, the game shall continue to a penalty kick shootout.

### Penalty Kick Shootout Procedure:

1. The referee tosses a coin to decide the goal at which the kicks will be taken which may only be changed for safety reasons or if the goal or playing surface becomes unusable.
2. The referee tosses the coin a second time and the team that wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick.
3. Only players who were on the pitch at the end of play will be allowed to participate. If one side has more players on the pitch than the other, whether because of injury or misconduct, then the side with more players must select some players who will not take part.
4. Each team is responsible for selecting from the eligible players the order in which they will take the kicks. The referee is not informed of the order. A player who left the game or overtime due to injury or misconduct is not eligible.

### During the penalty kick shootout:

All eligible players, except the player taking the kick and the two goalkeepers, must remain within the center circle.

Each kick will be taken in the general manner of a penalty kick. See Law 14 on The Penalty Kick. For U8 only, the penalty kicks shall be taken from center field with no goalie or defender. The fifth kicker can be selected from one of the players that were not on the field, but should be identified before beginning the shootout.

Each kicker can kick the ball only once per attempt. Once kicked, the kicker may not play the ball again.

No other player on either team, other than the designated kicker and goalkeeper, may touch the ball.

A kick is successful if the ball crosses the goal line within the goal without touching any player, official, or outside agent other than the defending goalkeeper. The ball may touch the goalkeeper, goal posts, or crossbar any number of times before going into the goal, as long as the referee believes the ball's motion is the result of the initial kick.

Teams take turns to kick from the penalty mark until each has taken five kicks. However, if one side has scored more successful kicks than the other could possibly reach with all its remaining kicks, the shoot-out immediately ends regardless of the number of kicks remaining.

If at the end of these five rounds of kicks the teams have scored an equal number of successful kicks, additional rounds of one kick each will be used until the tie is broken; this is known as sudden death.

The team that scores the most successful kicks at the end of the shootout will be the winner of the match.

No player will be allowed to take a second kick until all other eligible players on their team have taken their first kick, including the goalkeeper.

If it becomes necessary for players to take another kick, players are not required to kick in the same order.

A team may replace a goalkeeper who becomes injured or sent off during the shootout; however, no field player can act as a goalkeeper during the shootout unless they did so during regular playing time.

If a player, other than the goalkeeper, becomes injured or is sent off during the shootout, then the shootout will continue with no substitution allowed.

## Appendix B – Weather and Field Condition Policy

The following weather and field conditions will be used as guidelines for determining match suspensions.

If any of these conditions are met, or anticipated to be met prior to match play, then notification will be made to coaches no later than one hour before the scheduled match start time.

If any of these conditions are met during match play, with at least 50% of the match being completed, the match will be suspended complete and not be rescheduled unless otherwise agreed upon by both Coaches and division Commissioner.

If any of these conditions are met during match play, with less than 50% of the match being completed, the match will be suspended and rescheduled unless otherwise agreed upon by both Coaches and division Commissioner. When the suspended match is rescheduled, the game will resume at the point where it was suspended.

### Conditions:

See the PDSA website and the **WBGT** (Wet Bulb Globe Temperature) to determine playable weather.

- Actual Temperature: less than 32°F or “Feels like” greater than 95°F
- Wind: Sustained 35 mph or gusts more than 50 mph
- Lightning: Anytime the field Lightning Detection Alarm is alarming.
- Field Conditions: Standing water or snow or otherwise deemed not suitable by a PDSA Board Member

## **Appendix C – Regular Season Standings & Tournament Seedings**

Regular season results will be accumulated by PDSA Board throughout the season from completed score cards each week. Division standings will be determined by standard cumulative point totals awarded from each game outcome (Win = 3 pts, Tie = 1 pt, Loss = 0 pts). Standings will be communicated within each division throughout the season as often as possible on a weekly basis. Final regular season standings will determine postseason tournament seedings.

In the tournament there is no margin for rescheduling games. Game schedules will be posted and will not be moved unless deemed absolutely necessary by the Board and division Commissioner. Tournament games will be double elimination except for the final game.

### **Tiebreakers:**

Ties in the standings are resolved in order by the following factors:

Overall Standings Points

Goal Differential (Goals Scored minus Goals Allowed)

Head-to-Head Results (if tie between two teams)

Goals Scored

