

11v11 Soccer - Rules

Revised Fall 2024

Intramural soccer games will be conducted under the National Federation High School (NFHS) rules, with any exceptions listed below. Final interpretations and modifications shall be determined by the Coordinator of Competitive Sports.

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General Intramural Sports Policies and Procedures

Signing-In and Rosters

1. All players must present a valid Mason ID in order to sign-in and participate in an intramural contest.
2. A player that does not have their Mason ID may still sign-in using a valid government issued photo ID (i.e. a driver's license or passport), *if* their name is already listed on the IMLeagues roster.
3. An individual is bound to the *first* team they sign-in for.
4. A participant can only play on 1 Co-Rec team and 1 single-gender team (i.e. Men's or Fraternity).

Forfeits and Defaults

1. Teams that are not present at their scheduled contest by game time, or are unable to produce enough eligible players to field a team, will be assessed a forfeit.
2. A team may delay it's right to win by forfeit and allow the other team a grace period of 5-minutes to acquire a properly equipped team. The game clock will start at game time. The 5-Minute Rule comes into effect when:
 - a. At least 1 (one) person from the team is properly checked in.
 - b. The captain/team that is not properly prepared to play with the minimum number of players will have 5 minutes to become ready to play.
 - c. If the 5-minute time limit expires and the team still does not have the minimum number of players, the game will be forfeited to the team that has the minimum number of players present.
 - d. If at any time, during the 5-minute limit, the team acquires the minimum number of players, the game will begin. The game clock will remain at the time that has passed and will continue in accordance with sport rules.
3. The captain of the forfeited team will be assessed a \$25 Forfeit Buy-Back fee. Additionally, the team will be ineligible for playoffs until the fee is paid.

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4. If a team knows in advance that they will be unable to field a team on a given night; they may avoid the forfeit fee and loss of playoff eligibility by completing a Default Notification form by 1:00pm on the business day of the contest.
 - a. For Sunday games, this form must be completed by 1:00pm the Friday before.

Sportsmanship

To be eligible for playoffs, intramural soccer teams **MUST** have an average sportsmanship rating of a 2.5.

Competitive Sports expects all participants and spectators to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Unsportsmanlike conduct or other inappropriate behavior occurring in Mason Recreation indoor or outdoor facilities before, during, or after intramural events will not be tolerated. Teams will be held accountable for the actions of their players (both participating and non-participating) and their fans. Officials and the Mason Recreation staff have the authority to impose and enforce penalties on teams, players and/or fans that have committed offenses. Penalties for post-game, playoff, and tournament play violations may be carried over into subsequent games and/or sport seasons. The officials will rate each team in each contest. The authority of the officials' rating exists prior to, during, and following all contests to which that official is assigned, and extends to all persons on, at, or near the playing site. Sportsmanship ratings shall be marked on the score sheet. In all cases the Competitive Sports Supervisors and administrative staff may provide input, which may raise or lower the rating. Supervisors may amend the rating for inappropriate conduct or use of an ineligible player.

- **0** - Team is completely uncooperative and out of control before, during, or after a contest. The team captain exhibits poor or no control over themselves, the team, and/or the spectators. The team has multiple ejections or blatant unsportsmanlike conduct that endangers participants, fans, officials, or supervisors. Team fails to cooperate/comply with intramural sports administrative staff, university officials, or law enforcement while performing their duties; falsely represents or withholds any requested information.
 - **Teams that receive a "0" rating are subject to immediate dismissal from the league or tournament**
- **1** - Teams constantly comment to the officials and/or opposing teams from the field and/or sidelines. The team captain exhibits little or no control over teammates or himself/herself. Majority of individuals on this team are disrespectful of opponents or officials on a regular basis. Teams that receive a second unacceptable rating ("1") in the same sport or activity are subject to immediate dismissal from league or tournament play.
- **2**- Team members or spectators are disrespectful of opponents or officials on a number of occasions, which may or may not warrant a penalty. Captain exhibits minor control over his/herself and his/her teammates and spectators. Teams receiving multiple warnings or having a player ejected for an unsportsmanlike act should receive no higher than a "2" rating.
- **3**- Team members and spectators are respectful of opponents and officials except for one or two minor incidents, which may or may not merit a warning from the game officials or supervisor.

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- **4-** Players cooperate fully with the officials about rule interpretations and calls. The captain also has full control of his/her teammates. Team members and spectators were respectful of opponents and officials and encouraged each other's efforts. At no time was this team disrespectful towards participants or officials.

Protest

1. A team captain may protest player eligibility and rule interpretation, but *not* the judgement of officials.
2. To file a protest, notification of the protest must be made to a game official prior to the *next live ball*.
3. A player's eligibility must be protested *prior to the start of the contest*.

For more information regarding the policies and procedures of Intramural Sports, please see the Intramural Sports Handbook on IMLeagues and the Mason Recreation website.

Inclement Weather

1. Information regarding postponement or cancellation of intramural sports contests due to inclement weather will be available through announcements on IMLeagues, through email, or by phone.
 - a. Every effort will be made to announce decisions to cancel outdoor games by 3:00pm on weekdays and 12:00pm on Sunday.
 - b. The decision may also be determined at game time by the Competitive Sports staff.
2. Regular season games cancelled due to inclement weather will not be rescheduled and both teams will receive a sportsmanship rating of a 3.
3. Playoff games cancelled due to inclement weather will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

Equipment

1. ***Shin guards manufactured for the sport of soccer are required to play.***
 - a. Each player must have properly sized shin guards and socks that *completely cover* the shin guards.
 - b. DIY replacements made from items including but not limited to cardboard, newspaper, or metal will not be permitted.
 - c. Any player that removes their shin guards during a contest will receive a yellow card and be asked to leave the playing surface until the next opportunity for a substitution. That team will have to play down a player until they can be legally subbed back into the game.
2. ***Teams must provide their own ball.***
 - a. The official shall be the sole judge of any ball offered for play and may change the ball during play at their discretion.
3. Teams must wear jerseys/shirts with the same shade of color, goalkeepers must wear a different colored shirt than either team.
 - a. Home teams should play in white shirts, and away teams should play in dark colors.

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- b. Jackets/hoodies may be worn provided there are no exposed pockets and the hooded portion is tucked into the back of the player's shirt.
4. All players must wear athletic shoes made of canvas, leather, or synthetic material which cover the entire foot.
 - a. *No metal cleats will be permitted.*
 - b. Hats with a brim, rigid sunglasses, and handwarmers are not permitted.
5. The Competitive Sports office highly encourages participants to remove any jewelry prior to participation. Participants that choose to wear jewelry do so at their own risk.
 - a. The Competitive Sports staff reserves the right to remove a participant from play if they deem the jewelry to be unsafe to themselves or others.
 - b. The safety of a piece may depend on the sport or activity being played.
6. Casts (plaster, metal, or other hard substances in their final form) or any other item judged to be dangerous by any Competitive Sports staff (including the Athletic Trainer) may not be worn during the game.
 - a. Knee braces made of hard, unyielding substances covered on both sides with all edges overlapped and any other hard substances covered with slow recovery rubber or similar material will be allowed.

Contest Timing

1. Contests will start at the time they are scheduled on IMLeagues. Teams should check-in with the Competitive Sports Supervisor 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
2. Teams will have 50 minutes to complete their scheduled intramural 11v11 soccer contest (or game).
3. One game (or contest) will consist of two (2), twenty-minute (20) halves of continuous running time and a three (3) minute intermission between halves. There will be no stoppage time.
4. Teams will have two (2) timeouts per game, lasting no more than one (1) minute.
5. If the game is tied at the end of regulation during a playoff game, an overtime will occur.
 - a. Overtime does not occur during regular season games.
 - b. See rules below for overtime procedures.
6. If a team is ahead by ten (10) or more goals at half time or in the second half, the game will end.
7. If a team is ahead by five (5) or more goals with five-minutes, or less in the second half, the game will end.
 - a. If a team is ahead by four (4) goals and is deemed to be stalling, the officials may end the game and deduct sportsmanship points.

Players

1. Team rosters on IMLeagues are unlimited.
2. Teams will play with eleven (11) players on the field at one time. A minimum of eight (8) players is needed to start or continue a game.
 - a. Seven (7) players are allowed if an individual cannot continue due to injury.
 - b. One player must be designated as a goalkeeper.

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3. When a team has forfeited, the opposing team must have at least eight (8) players checked in with the Competitive Sports Supervisor to receive a win.
4. Substitutions are unlimited. Substitutes must enter from mid-field and with the official's approval.
 - a. All teams may substitute when:
 - i. A goal is scored
 - ii. A player is injured
 - iii. On a goal kick
 - iv. When a player from either team is shown a yellow or red card
 - b. The team in possession of the ball may substitute:
 - i. On a throw-in
 - ii. On a corner kick
 - c. The team not in possession of the ball may substitute on a throw-in or on a corner kick *if* the team in possession of the ball is also substituting.
 - d. A goalkeeper may change places with a player on the field at any substitution opportunity for the team. The official must be informed of the change and the players must exchange colors.
 - e. An injured player must be removed until the next opportunity to substitute if Competitive Sports staff are beckoned for the purpose of providing assistance. Time must come off the clock prior to any legal re-entry.
5. During a Co-Rec 11v11 soccer game, the team must have a minimum of four (4) women and four (4) men on the field at all times.
 - a. Neither gender can exceed six (6) players.

Game Rules

Start of the Game

1. Prior to the game there will be a captain's meeting and coin toss. The options for the team winning the toss will be:
 - a. Offense/Defense
 - b. Side
2. The game will begin with a kickoff from the center of the field.
 - a. During the kickoff, each team must be on their own half, and the defensive team must be outside the center circle.
 - b. The ball may roll in any direction to start play after the official blows the ready to play whistle.
 - c. After the ball is kicked, the kicker may not touch the ball again until it is touched by another player.
3. At halftime, teams switch sides and the team that did not kick off in the first half will kick off to start in the second half.

Individuals on the Sideline

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1. All players that are not in the field of play, and all coaches on the sidelines must stay within the bench area.
2. Team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, spectators, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game and shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.

Scoring

1. The ball must *completely* cross the goal line to score.
 - a. A goal may be scored during play directly from a kick off, a direct free kick, penalty kick, corner kick, or a goal kick.
 - b. A goal may *not* be scored directly from an indirect free kick, a throw-in, or a drop ball.
2. After the goal, the ball is returned to the center of the field for another kick off. The team that gave up the goal will kick off.
3. In the event that a *playoff* game ends in a tie after regulation time, two (2) golden goal periods of five (5) minutes will be played with the following procedures:
 - a. At the end of regulation time, the winner of a coin toss will decide if they will take the ball or choose a goal to defend.
 - b. The first team to score during either overtime period will be declared the winner.
 - c. There will be no intermission between the two overtime periods.
4. In the event that a *playoff* game is still tied after two (2) golden goal periods, a penalty shootout will determine the winner.
 - a. Any five (5) players from each team, which were on the field at the end of the second overtime, will be selected by the team to shoot.
 - b. The goalkeepers will be the same goalkeepers from the end of the second overtime.
 - c. There will be a coin flip and the winner will decide kick first or second.
 - d. Each team has a total of five (5) penalty kicks and will alternate each kick. No rebounds are allowed.
 - i. In a Co-Rec soccer game, teams must alternate between female and male kickers.
 - e. The kicker must wait for the official to start the play on each kick.
 - f. If the score is tied at the end of the shootout, a sudden death shootout will be held, with any player on the field being eligible to kick. Each team will alternate kicks until one of the teams misses a shot.
 - i. A player may not kick twice unless all other players have kicked once.

Out of Bounds

1. The ball must completely cross any boundary line in the air or on the ground to be considered out of bounds.
 - a. The ball is still in play if it stays in-bounds after rebounding off the goal or corner flags.
 - b. If the ball rebounds off an official, and it leads to a possession change, goal, or promising attack, the ball will be dead.
2. To restart play after the ball goes out of play, the following methods will be used:
 - a. *Throw-ins*: when the ball crosses the sidelines.
 - b. *Goal kick*: when the ball crosses the end line, and the offense touched the ball last.
 - c. *Corner kick*: when the ball crosses the end line, and the defense touched the ball last.

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- i. The ball is placed a yard away from the corner marker and kicked. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- d. *Free kicks*: taken after a foul has been called.
- e. *Drop-ball*: following a temporary suspension of play for an injury or an unusual situation
 - i. Drop-balls will be uncontested and awarded to the team last in possession of the ball.

Throw-In

1. If the ball crosses the sidelines and goes out of play, a throw-in will be awarded to the team that *did not* touch it last.
2. At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:
 - a. Be facing the field of play
 - b. Have both feet on the ground on or behind the sideline
 - c. Use both hands
 - d. Deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous motion
 - e. *Not* be the first player to touch the ball when it re-enters play
 - f. If the above conditions are not met, the opposing team will be awarded the throw-in
3. Opponents shall not interfere or impede the actions of the thrower and shall stand at least two (2) yards from the point at which the throw is being taken.
 - a. The throw-in team will be awarded a re-throw.

Corner Kick

1. A corner kick will be awarded to the attacking team when the entire ball passes over the goal line in the air or on the ground having last been touched by the defending team, and a goal is not scored.
2. The ball must be placed on the corner arc nearest the point where the ball crossed the goal line.
3. Players of the defending team must be at least ten (10) yards from the ball until has been kicked.
 - a. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.
4. The kicker may not touch the ball again before it has been touched by another player.

Goal Kick

1. A goal kick is awarded to the defending team when the entire ball crosses the goal line in the air or on the ground having last been touched by the attacking team, and a goal is not scored.
2. Players opposing the kicker must remain outside the penalty area until the ball has cleared the penalty area.
3. The ball must be kicked from the ground from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team.
 - a. The ball is in play when the team administering the kick plays it to another player.

Sliding

1. Slide tackles are illegal in intramural soccer.
 - a. On the first offense:
 - i. If the slide tackle is made and it is *not* deemed malicious, it will result in a yellow card and the entire team will be issued a verbal warning

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1. The second offense by any player on the same team for a slide tackle will automatically result in a red card.
 - ii. If the slide tackle is made and it *is* deemed malicious (i.e. playing the player instead of the ball and/or from behind), it will result in a red card, an automatic 2 Sportsmanship Rating, and the entire team will be issued a verbal warning.
 1. The second offense by any player on the team will result in a second ejection and a forfeit.
2. A defensive player may leave their feet to stop the forward progress of the ball, only when another player is *NOT* in the immediate vicinity.
 - a. If a defensive player leaves their feet within 6 feet of another player in the direction of that player, it shall be deemed a slide tackle.
3. A goalkeeper may leave their feet to save the ball, as long as they do not play the ball with their feet.
 - a. A goalkeeper leaving their feet within 6 feet of another player must do so with their legs in a bent position, knees parallel to the opposing player, and may not at any time attempt to play the ball with their feet while on the ground. Doing so will be deemed a slide tackle.

Offside

4. A player is in the offside position when the player is nearer to their opponent's goal line than the ball, unless:
 - a. The player is in their own half of the field of play.
 - b. The player is not nearer to the opponent's goal line than at least two opponents.
5. A player is penalized for being in an offside position if, at the time touches or is played by a teammate, the player becomes involved in active play by:
 - a. Interfering with play.
 - b. Interfering with an opponent.
 - c. Seeking to gain an advantage by being in that position.
6. A player is *not* penalized for being in an offside position if the ball is received directly from a goal kick, corner kick, or throw-in.
7. A player that receives the ball from an opponent who deliberately plays the ball (except from a deliberate save) is not considered to have gained an advantage.

Free Kicks

1. Free kicks shall be classified as *direct* (from which a goal may be scored directly) or *indirect* (from which a goal may not be scored directly unless the ball is touched by a player other than the kicker).
2. All free kicks are taken from the spot of the foul.
 - a. Direct free kicks awarded to the attacking team in the penalty area are penalty kicks.
3. For all free kicks, the defending team must be 10 yards from the ball or standing on their own goal line between the goal posts.
 - a. If a free kick is awarded to a defending team within their own penalty area, opposing players must be 10 yards away from the ball and outside the penalty area.
 - i. The ball will not be in play until it is moved directly beyond the penalty area.

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4. Direct free kicks will be awarded for, and are not limited to, the following offenses:
 - a. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent.
 - b. Tripping or attempting to trip an opponent.
 - c. Jumping at an opponent.
 - d. Striking or attempting to strike an opponent.
 - i. Player will also receive an automatic red card and an ejection.
 - e. Charging an opponent.
 - i. A fair charge is one in which a player:
 1. Makes non-violent, shoulder-to-shoulder contact with an opponent.
 2. Has the arms and elbows close to the body.
 3. Has at least one foot on the ground.
 4. Is within playing distance of the ball.
 - ii. A player having one or both feet on the ground shall not charge into an opponent that has no feet on the ground.
 - iii. A player shall not charge into the goalkeeper in the penalty area.
 - f. Handling, carrying, striking, or propelling the ball with a hand or arm.
 - i. If a player handles the ball on a play that was deemed an obvious goal scoring opportunity by the official, the player shall be issued a red card.
 - ii. If it occurs within the penalty area a penalty kick will be awarded.
 - iii. A goalkeeper may not intentionally strike or attempt to strike an opponent by throwing the ball at them.
 - g. Tackling or challenging an opponent
 - h. Impeding an opponent with contact.
5. Indirect free kicks will be awarded for, and are not limited to, the following offenses:
 - a. Any high kick above the waist in a dangerous manner, including players who may be on the ground and still playing with the ball within the playing area (i.e. dangerous play).
 - b. A player not in possession of the ball or not attempting to play the ball, intentionally running between an opponent and the ball *or* using the body as an obstacle (i.e. obstruction).
 - i. A player may not interfere with the goalkeeper in possession of the ball.
 - c. A player is penalized for being offside.
 - d. If the goalkeeper touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to them by a teammate.
 - e. A goalkeeper holds the ball for more than five (5) seconds after taking possession/control.
 - i. A goalkeeper cannot take more than five (5) seconds bouncing or throwing the ball into the air and catching it again, without releasing it into play.
 - f. A goalkeeper may not dribble the ball into the penalty area and handle the ball *if* their own teammate was the last player to have possession of the ball.

Penalty Kicks

1. Direct free kicks awarded to the attacking team in the penalty area are penalty kicks.
2. During a penalty kick, the following must occur:

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- a. The ball be placed on the penalty mark
 - b. The player taking the penalty kick must be properly identified and kick the ball in one fluid motion
 - c. The defending goalkeeper must remain on their goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, without touching the goal until the ball has been kicked
 - d. All other players must be located outside the penalty area, behind the penalty mark, and at least 5 yards away.
3. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves forward.
 4. The following contains potential infringements and their related outcomes:

Infringements	Outcome of Kick	
	Goal	No Goal
Attacking Player	Penalty is retaken	Indirect free kick
Kicker kicks backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
Kick by unidentified player	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
Defending player	Goal	Penalty is retaken
By both teams	Penalty is retaken	Penalty is retaken

Goalkeeper Restrictions

1. Outside the penalty area, goalkeepers have no more privileges than other players on the field.
 - a. When goalkeepers place the ball on the ground, they relinquish their rights as goalkeepers.
2. Possession or control of the ball is when the goalkeeper has the ball trapped by either *or* both hands *or* when bouncing it to the ground *or* when releasing the ball into play.
 - a. An official shall disqualify (red card) any player who flagrantly fouls the goalkeeper in possession of the ball.

Misconduct

1. A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if they commit any of the following:
 - a. Unsporting behavior
 - b. Shows dissent by word or action
 - c. Persistently infringes on the rules of the game
 - d. Delays the start of the game
 - e. Fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick
 - f. Enters, or re-enters the field of play without the official's permission
 - g. Deliberately leaves the field of play without the official's permission
 - h. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick
 - i. First, non-malicious slide tackle for a team
2. A player is shown the red card and ejected if they commit any of the following:
 - a. Serious foul play

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- b. Violent conduct
 - c. Spits at an opponent or any other person
 - d. Uses offensive, insulting, or abusive language
 - e. Second slide tackle for the same team, or a malicious slide tackle
 - f. Receives a second yellow card in the same game
3. An official shall disqualify any player who flagrantly fouls the goalkeeper in possession of the ball.
 4. Two ejected players on a team, or any combination of 3 unsporting yellow cards, in the same game will result in forfeiture of the game.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Competitive Sports Office via email at imsports@gmu.edu. Our office is open Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm.