



FA Walking Football Laws of the Game 2025

Summary Guide for Members

Key Points

<i>No running (just walking with one foot on the ground at all times)</i>	<i>No playing the ball if kneeling, sitting lying on the ground</i>
<i>No Contact</i>	<i>No backing into a defender when in possession of the ball</i>
<i>No slide tackling or tackling from behind</i>	<i>No offsides</i>
<i>No heading the ball and the ball must not go above 2m (or height of crossbar)</i>	<i>Freekicks are always indirect – corners and penalties are direct</i>
<i>No abusing the referee, teammates or opposing players</i>	

1. Field of Play (Pitch Guidelines) (LAW 1)

- 5-/6-a-side: Length 25–50m, Width 16–35m
- 7-a-side: Length 50–60m, Width 30–40m
- Penalty area: 6m-radius semi-circle from goal centre. Penalty mark: 6.5m from the goal line.

2. Ball & Equipment (LAW 2 & 4)

- The ball must be spherical, size-appropriate, and may only be changed with referee approval.
- Compulsory equipment: shirts, shorts/trousers, socks, shin pads (covered), and suitable footwear.
- Must not wear jewellery (covered plain wedding bands may be permitted) or watches (even under wristbands).
- Protective equipment (e.g. headgear, sports glasses) are allowed if not dangerous.
- Equipment violations: player must leave the field to correct and be checked by the referee before returning.

3. Players & Referee (LAW 3 & 5)

- Teams consist of 5–7 players on the pitch, plus up to 5 substitutes.
- Rolling substitutions allowed during stoppages with referee permission – a player must leave before substitute enters. Offence for early entry or incorrect exit = play stopped, blue card to substitute, indirect free kick to opposition.
- A match is invalid if a team drops below minimum numbers due to injury or dismissal.
- Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game. Decisions will be made to the best of the referee's ability and the 'spirit of the game'. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final and must always be respected.

4. Starts & Restarts (LAW 8)

- Restarts include kick-offs, indirect free kicks, dropped balls, goal clearances, and corners.
- No goals may be scored directly from kick-offs or kick-ins.

5. Ball In and Out of Play (LAW 9)

- Ball is out when fully over the boundary or exceeds the 2m height limit (or height of crossbar).
- Height offences result in an indirect free kick from the point of infringement.

6. Scoring (LAW 10)

- A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line under the bar and between the posts.
- Attacking goalkeepers may not score, except in a penalty shootout.

7. Offside (LAW 11)

- There is no offside in walking football.

8. Fouls & Tackling Guidance (LAW 12)

Walking football is a non-contact format. Referees use a lower threshold than in traditional football.

Challenge categories:

- **Careless** (when a player shows a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge) – **free kick only**
- **Reckless** (when a player acts with disregard to the dangers or consequences for an opponent) – **blue card (sin bin)**
- **Excessive force** (when a player exceeds the necessary force and/or endangers safety) – **red card (dismissal)**

Tackles from behind **are always** penalized – at least deemed **Careless**.

Side tackles are allowed only if safe and no contact made.

Incidental contact may be allowed at the referee's discretion.

Common Foul Examples include:

- *Player offences:* Running, pushing, tripping, sliding, holding, charging, shielding with barriers, playing on the ground, heading the ball, deliberate handball, backing into another player (making contact).
- *Goalkeeper offences:* Holding or leaving the ball stationary in the penalty area for more than 6 seconds, receiving a direct return pass without an opponent touching it.
- Delaying the restart of play (free kicks, corners, throw-ins, goal clearances) is a blue card offence.

10. Disciplinary Sanctions (LAW 12)

- **Blue card:** 2–5 minute sin bin for dissent, delaying restarts, encroachment, persistent fouling, unsporting behaviour.
- **Red card:** serious foul play, violent conduct, spitting, offensive language, or receiving two blue cards.

11. Walking Offences (LAW 12 & 18)

- Players must walk at all times — at least one foot on the ground.
- Referees may play advantage but must record the offence.
- Fourth team walking offence = penalty to opposition; team count resets.

12. Set Piece Rules (LAW 13, 14, 15 & 16)

Free Kicks:

- All indirect, ball must be stationary and clearly move
- Kickers may not touch ball twice; opponents must be 3m away
- Delays = blue card

Penalty Kicks:

- Serious DOGSO (Denial of Goal Scoring Opportunities) fouls
- Fourth (4th) walking team offences
- Goalkeeper deliberately exiting goalkeepers' area
- Defender deliberately entering own goalkeepers' area (if the ball is on the line anywhere on the 'D' it is in the area and only the goalkeeper can play the ball)
- Kicker max 2m behind ball; opponents 3m away with all players except goalkeeper behind ball

Kick-In / Roll-In:

- Replace throw-ins, taken correctly at restart point, on the line
- Roll-ins must be underarm

Goal Clearance:

- Keeper throws or kicks underarm, or kicks stationary ball from ground (no drop kicks allowed) - ball must leave area
- Keeper cannot receive ball back from a goal clearance unless touched by an opponent or 2 members of own team

Corner Kicks:

- Can score directly from a corner kick