

Fistball

Rules of the Game and their correct interpretation

Training Manual for Referees

Edition 2025



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Foreword

The basic idea of this document is to standardize the interpretation and application of the rules of the game and the behavior of the fistball referee before, during and after the game in all member associations.

The content is binding for all member associations! Country-specific features are possible, they are listed in the appendix to this folder.

The document is available online on the IFA website (www.ifa-fistball.com) and is based on the rules of the game for 2025.

Of course, this information is not only very useful for the referee, but also for every coach and player.

black	=	Rule of the Game
blue	=	Interpretation/Explanation

Explanation and correct interpretation

2 teams consisting of 5 players each play against each other on a court which is divided into 2 halves by a marked line and a net or rope at a height of 2 meters for men and 1.90 meters for women.

A rally is continued until a team makes an error or a stoppage occurs.

The winner is the team that

- Court**

The diagram illustrates the layout of a futsal field, which is 50 meters long and 20 meters wide. The field is divided into several zones and areas:

- Field Length:** 50 meters (indicated by a dashed line across the middle).
- Field Width:** 20 meters (indicated by a dashed line on the right side).
- Court:** Two courts, each 25 x 20 meters, separated by a 3m line (3 meters) in the center.
- Referee's Zone:** A 6 x 12 meter zone located in the center of the field, between the two courts.
- Scorer's Zone:** A 3 x 6 meter zone located at the top and bottom center of the field.
- Substitute Zone:** Two 2 x 8 meter zones located on the left and right sides of the field.
- Photographer's Zone:** Two 3 x 3 meter zones located at the top and bottom corners of the field.
- Barrier:** A 1 meter high barrier is located on the left and right sides of the field.
- Buffer Zone:** A 6 meter wide zone is located on the left and right sides of the field.
- Field Entrance:** A 3m line (3 meters) is located at the top and bottom center of the field.

The diagram also includes a scale bar indicating 0, 10, and 20 meters.

RULES OF THE GAME

The rules are valid for both **Indoor** and **outdoor matches**. Alterations and supplementations due to indoor play are described separately. Special arrangements for youth are laid down in the addendum.

1 Court and Equipment

- 1.1 The court is a marked rectangle, 50 meters in length and 20 meters in width. The surface should be a level grass court.

Matches under floodlight are permitted.

Indoors

*The court is a marked rectangle, 40 meters in length and 20 meters in width.
Member associations are free to specify smaller sizes.*

Explanation of referee zone:

The referee zone offers the referee the opportunity to claim an exclusive zone which is meant to be used as a space to work. The referee decides how he wants the players and coaches to enter this zone. Entry by coaches or players does not have to be prohibited in principle, but if the referee considers it necessary and sensible, he can issue this prohibition.

- 1.1.1 The court is divided into 2 team-halves by a marked center line. Each half has a service line which is marked parallel to this central line at a distance of 3 meters.
- 1.1.2 Boundary lines, the central line and service lines must be clearly marked. The boundary lines are part of the court, the central line belongs to both halves.

Explanation of the position and dimensions of the lines:

The dimension from the center line to the 3 meter service line is measured from the center of the center line to the back edge of the 3 meter service line. The width of 20 meters is measured from outside to outside of the boundary lines.

A ball touching these lines is considered to be "in".

Explanation Out or In:

"A ball that touches these lines" = it must touch the line, and not just cover the line with its diameter (as in football, for example). Only exception is the situation that is described in Rule 7.2.1.

Indoors

It is regarded as a fault if the ball makes contact with the wall.

As for defense and passing, the whole ceiling is part of the court; a ball touching it is still playable. If the ball touches the ceiling on the service or return, however, it is regarded as the acting team's fault. All the unremovable fixtures are either part of the ceiling or the wall.

Explanation of hall wall/hall ceiling:

In order to avoid ambiguities regarding the allocation of ceiling or wall equipment, it is often necessary to define this with the team captains and linesmen before the game.

The same applies to the buffer zone, which can be variable in the hall.

1.1.3 The lines must be between 10 centimeters (5 centimeters for indoor matches) and 15 centimeters wide.

1.2 The following must be suspended between two free standing, upright posts at a height of 2 meters for men and 1.90 meters for women. The posts are placed at the intersection of the center line and the boundary lines.

- a **net**, which is between 3 centimeters and 6 centimeters wide if measured vertically or

- a **ribbon** which is between 3 centimeters and 6 centimeters wide if measured vertically or

- a **string** which is between 5 millimeters and 8 millimeters wide if measured vertically.

Nets (ribbons, strings) can only be accepted if they are easily distinguishable by a bright and dark coloring in intervals of 15 to 20 centimeters.

Explanation of line height:

The target height is measured from the ground/floor to the top of the net.

Since there is hardly an outdoor playing field that is absolutely level, it cannot be expected that the net (ribbon/rope) will have exactly the defined height in every area. A reasonable compensation must be achieved that keeps the deviations from the target height as small as possible.

Indoors

If the usage of free-standing posts is not possible, the posts can also be affixed to the floor or to the wall.

If the posts cannot be fixed at the intersection of the center line and the boundary line, this point must be marked by so called substitutional posts. (e.g. high jump racks)

It is not regarded as a fault if the ball or any player touches the anchoring or any other posts outside the marked intersection.

The lengthening of the net (ribbon/string) is regarded as anchoring; contacts by players with this lengthening are therefore not faults, whereas the contact by the ball or a player with those parts of the posts that are higher than 2 meters is regarded as a fault.

1.3 Spectators, neighboring courts and other barriers must be at least 6 meters away from both the sidelines and the baselines. The buffer zone must be clearly marked by a dashed line.

Indoors

The buffer zone must at least be 0.50 meters (for the sidelines) and 1 meter (for the baselines).

Explanation of the exit in the hall:

Since the buffer zone in the hall can be between 1m and 6m to the rear and between 0.5m and 6m to the side, it is necessary in certain halls to define or mark the buffer zone with the team captains before the game. This is important for the situation of interference by spectators and also if a substitute/coach is hit by the ball. In any case, it is advisable to end the zone before the first grandstand step. Managers and substitutes are often located there as well or in a substitute zone which is also outside the buffer zone. A team member standing there does not cause an error and no unnecessary discussions if the ball hits them or is caught for instance. The same applies to balls that are caught by spectators in the stands and which could still have been played by the player. (Spectators outside the buffer zone = no priority playing rights for the players)

- 1.4 The fistball is a hollow ball filled with air. Its basic color is white, but up to 20 percent of the surface can be made up of several smaller colored pieces. The ball must be fully inflated.

During the whole match the ball must satisfy the requirements stated in the annex.

Balls used in international matches or in the highest leagues of the member federations must meet additional criteria set by the committee and the Technical Commission of the International Fistball Association.

- 1.5 Before the match begins, both team captains draw lots supervised by the referee.

The winner either chooses:

- the side or
- which team has the first service ("defend" or "service")

The other captain decides out of the remaining possibility. The serving team always chooses all balls submitted by one of the teams for the first set.

Explanation of ball choice:

The team that serves chooses the submitted set of balls to be played in that set (own team's balls or opponent's balls). From this set, the referee chooses which ball to play. There is no determination of the order within the submitted balls.

At IFA events, the IFA may pre-select balls. Then the choice is limited to who has the first service.

- 1.6 Each team provides at least one standard ball. All balls are checked by the referee prior to the start of play and are adjusted as needed. The balls not in use remain under the referee's control, but outside the buffer zone.

Explanation of compliance of the ball with the rules:

The referee checks this data to the best of his knowledge and belief, even without tools, unless there is a ball scale or air pressure gauge on site. If necessary, the air pressure is corrected by a designee or the referee. In the event of an objection from a team, the team must prove that there is an issue. This is not the referee's or organizer's responsibility.

The referee checks all submitted balls before the start of the game. If you notice anything unusual that could disrupt the flow of the game, the ball is not permitted as a game ball (e.g. lubricant that sticks to the ground and could cause an atypical bounce).

After the ball test, the teams are not allowed to make any more changes to the balls. The referee however can, if the playability (ball loses air to below the lower limit) of the ball is lost and the game is about to be abandoned due to a lack of balls.

If a ball is deliberately wetted with moisture or prepared with lubricant during play, the player concerned must be verbally warned immediately (other possible penalties if repeated) and, if necessary, another ball must be brought into play. A ball change also should happen should the ball become moistened from standing water in the buffer zone or outside of the field space when the field conditions are considered dry.

If all balls lose their playability in the course of the game, the referee can check other balls and add them to the submitted balls. He can also remove balls from the ball quota if they have lost their ability to play.

Explanation of use of ball kids:

The following must be observed when using ball kids:

The ball is brought to the referee and placed there with the reserve balls.

Ball kids only put the ball back into play if the referee tells them to do so. By quickly bringing the ball back into the field (either "new ball" or "ball kid throws ball back into the field after being asked"), the referee encourages a speedy continuation of the game.

The balls not in use remain under the referee's control, but outside the buffer zone.

Control during the set break or half-time break: The match balls either stay with the referee or – if he makes them available for the teams to warm up – he checks before the game restarts whether changes have been made to the balls. In this case he can remove them from the submitted balls or reverse the change (e.g. air pressure). Penalty options for unauthorized changes to the state of the ball by the teams are open to the referee. The organizer can generally prohibit the use of submitted balls for warm-up. If there are no instructions from the organizer, the decision about this rests with the referee.

- 1.6.1 If one team does not provide a match ball prior to the start of play, then it is not allowed to introduce its own ball during the remainder of the match.
- 1.6.2 If neither team can provide a standard ball, the match will not take place.
The supervising organizer decides on punitive measures to be taken.
- 1.6.3 The referee decides which ball out of the selected balls chosen by the team is to be played.
- 1.6.4 If none of the teams selected balls are available, the opponent's submitted balls will be used.
As soon as at least one of the selected balls is available, it is returned to the game before the next service.

Explanation ball exchange:

Since the teams have chosen the ball allotment per set, and the referee decides on the ball from this allotment, the exchange back to the selected allotment is mandatory. An exchange back to a specific ball is at the discretion of the referee. If the referee sees a need during a game to change from dry to wet balls or vice versa, he alone decides on a change that will be carried out the next time the game is stopped.

- 1.7 The IFA can license or prescribe certain types of balls, nets, ribbons or strings for international competitions.

The national member federations can do the same for national competitions.

Notes

The national member federations may permit departures from the above rules on the court's dimensions and the ball's weight for women's, senior or junior competitions, but not in the height of the net (ribbon/string).

2 Team

- 2.1 A team consists of 5 players and 5 substitutes who become part of the team from their first entry into the match (exception youth games). The game can still be played with one less player on the field on each team. At least 4 players must play, but a fifth missing player may join at any time (this is known as completion). If a team is missing two players on the field, the game cannot be played.

All players as well as coaches and officials must be entered in the match report before the start of the match. Players which are used must be marked with a cross from the point in time they enter the court.

For IFA competitions there are substitute zones where the substitutes are located. The substitute zones can only be left to warm up. If a substitute or trainer/coach enters the field during a game, this is to be marked as a fault. Only 2 people (coaches, supervisors) who are noted in the game report and who are clearly different in their clothing (color) from the players are allowed to stay within their own buffer zone during play. The only exception to this is during a time-out, when all team members may enter the buffer zone.

- 2.1.1 Substitutions between the 10 players can be carried out without constraint.
- 2.1.2 Additions and substitutions may only be made by the serving team after a rallye and when the referee has been notified in advance.
- Substitution (entry and leaving) must be carried out at one's own service line.

Explanation of substitution:

The notification of a substitution can be made by the coach, official or captain.

Substitutions may be completed on both sides of the field (by the referee and on the opposite side) at the area between the service line and the net.

Both teams may substitute if the match has been interrupted by the referee.

Explanation: Interruption:

e.g. in case of injury, timeout, etc.

Explanation: Substitution during the timeout:

If a team substitutes during the timeout, the whistle signaling the end of the timeout counts as the whistle signaling a point. In close succession to these is the last opportunity to announce the substitution. The replaced player does not have to come back onto the field, the new player enters the field at the three-meter line after confirmation by the referee.

Different rules may apply, if the event is broadcast on tv or internet in order to show the replacement after timeout on camera.

If substitution is carried out without notifying the referee or if there are more than 5 players on the court, the referee interrupts the rally and awards a point to the opponents.

If the team that does not have the right to serve reports a substitution/addition, the referee must prevent the substitution before the restart of the match.

Explanation: Intention to substitute without the right to substitute:

Prevent by shouting: "No substitution possible". Request to continue the game quickly with the next service.

- 2.1.3 Substitutions have to be carried out without delay.

Comentado [EK1]: which is it?

Comentado [MM2R1]: corrected it with the wording translated from original GER version

Explanation without delay:

A substitution must be made after a point. That means not just before the next service is about to start. If the notification of a substitution is made shortly before the start of the next point, or if there is no player that is clearly ready after the notification to carry out the substitution after the previous point, the change must be prevented and the next point started. If an intentional time delay is recognizable, an interruption is required to issue a warning to the team if the delay is repeated, which will result in a penalty point if the game is delayed again.

- 2.2 One player is the team's captain and has thus to be marked by wearing an appropriate armband. They are the only speaker of the team during the match and are responsible for entry and farewell.

An "armband" is only to be worn on the arm!

The team captain is the referee's point of contact for general questions (e.g. verbal warnings to the team in timed games, announcement of extra time....). In these cases and also in the event of complaints from the team, he is the sole spokesman for the team.

In situations that affect an individual player (e.g. query, verbal warning, warning, sending off, etc.), this will be discussed with this player.

Of course, the referee can also communicate with all other players if he deems it appropriate.

For official messages to the team, however, the team captain is the contact person.

- 2.2.1 The captain continues to perform his duty if substituted except when he (she) has to leave the court. In this case the team has to appoint a new acting captain. The acting captain will be given the armband by the team's captain and will be the point of contact for the referee. If the original captain has been sent off, the acting captain will perform all captain duties.

The reason for this rule is that the referee has a responsible contact person on the pitch at all times and is not forced to go to the substitutes' bench for any explanations or questions. This is particularly important for events that are broadcast on TV or the internet.

The captain designee in the game report will not be filled out until the end of the match. The last captain during the match will be marked on the game report and will be responsible to sign the final game report.

- 2.3 Each team must wear a uniform of the same base design and color. Additional requirements for the uniform can be enforced by Competition Managers or National Federations.

- 2.3.1 Short-sleeved and long-sleeved kits are regarded as uniform.

- 2.3.2 The use of tracksuit bottoms is not permitted.

The International Fistball Association or the member federations may permit different trousers on condition that all players wear trousers of uniform, shape, and color.

- 2.3.3 Metal spikes are prohibited. Shoes and protection equipment (e.g., compression socks, compression pants, knee/ankle/elbow/head, etc) are not regulated.

3 Playing Time

- 3.1 The match is played **in sets**.

- 3.1.1 The match is completed as soon as one team has won **2, 3, 4 or 5 sets**.

The amount of sets are determined in the invitation to the competition or in the regulation of the relevant competition.

3.1.2 A team wins a set if it has won **11 points** by a margin of at least two points; otherwise play continues until one team leads by two points.

A set ends as soon as one team has won 15 points regardless of the margin, eg. 15:14.

3.1.3 Following the end of the first set, the choice of balls changes to the other team. Following the end of every set, change of side and first service are made.

3.1.4 Should a decisive set be required; lots are drawn again. As soon as one team wins 6 points, a change of side, choice of the submitted balls that will be used, and a service change are made. The change of side is considered an official break and follows 3.1.5.

Explanation of side change in decision set:

In the interests of clarification and uniformity, the changeover in the deciding set should be treated as an official interruption of play in accordance with Rule 3.1.5. The change of sides gives both teams the opportunity to receive instructions from the coach and to make substitutions. The game should be resumed after 90 seconds at the latest.

3.1.5 The break between the sets must not exceed 90 seconds.

Explanation of pause length:

The period of the set break begins with the whistle that accompanies the decisive point and ends with the indication to return to the field (continuous whistle) after 90 seconds. After this, the teams enter the field. The teams must enter the playing fields quickly. In the event of non-compliance and a clearly recognizable delay, the "time game rule" can be applied. With another short whistle - when all players are ready - the game can be restarted.

- 3.1.6 Specific rules for change of side: Players leave the court on their side at the completion of the set and change side outside the court. The players enter the court only after the referee's instruction (whistle).

Exception: Substitute players who prepare for a forthcoming substitution may use the court for their preparation.

First Note

The International Fistball Association and the member federations may also limit set-matches by time.

In this case clauses 3.1 to 3.1.5 are supplemented as follows:

- 3.2 Each set ends after **10 minutes** even if the difference in the score is not more than one point.
- 3.2.1 If a set ends in a draw, it is continued until one team leads by two points.
- Should a set's time end during a rally, the rally is interrupted and resumes with the last service.

Should the end of a set's time coincide with the end of a rally, the next rally starts with the service of the team that has made the last fault.

- 3.2.2 The beginning and end of a time-limited set is indicated acoustically. Each set is ended by a signal, the last five seconds being counted out.

Lost time caused by stoppages or delays has to be added at the end of the same set.

Second note

In exceptional cases the member federations may also allow time-limited matches.

- 3.3 The playing time is not more than two times fifteen minutes. The break must not exceed 90 seconds.

Lost time caused by stoppages or delays has to be added at the end of the same half.

The beginning and end of each half is indicated acoustically. Each half is ended by a signal, the last five seconds being counted out.

Following the half-time-break a change of side, choice of balls that will be used and service change are made.

- 3.3.1 Should the match be drawn at the end of normal play, the match is extended:

First period of extra time: lots are drawn according to clause 1.5, playing time two times five minutes. If the extra time should end in a draw, a

Second period of extra time follows: lots are drawn according to clause 1.5, playing time two times five minutes. If this extra time should end in a drawing again, the match is continued until one of the teams leads by two points.

Should playing time end during a rally, the rally is interrupted and resumes with the last service.

Should the end of playing time coincide with the end of a rally, the next rally starts with the service of the team that has made the last fault.

The break between these extra times must not exceed 90 seconds. During the extra times there is no break.

- 3.4 In matches according to clauses 3.1 each team is entitled to a break (time out) of 30 seconds per set after a rally upon notification of the referee.

The players must leave the court. Unless stated otherwise, time-outs are held in the buffer zone area at the referee's side of court. Coaches and reserve players cannot enter the playing field during or after the time-out (except indoor spaces where buffer zone is not big enough).

Explanation timeout:

"After a rally" means: Immediately afterwards. If the time-out is called after a significant amount of time has elapsed after the point has ended (or while the attacker is already ready to serve), the referee may refuse it and allow play to continue.

The time-out period starts with the referee's whistle, with which the request by the captain or the official/coach is acknowledged and accepted.

It ends with the request to continue playing after 30 seconds (continuous whistle). Substitution is possible for both teams.

When everyone involved is ready, the game is restarted with a short whistle.

A time-out can also be requested by the team that is **not serving**.

If a team requests a second time out in a set, this must be prevented. The referee has the option of issuing a verbal warning or warning for delaying the game (if the referee recognizes this intention).

The referee checks the entry (time out) in the game report and takes the game ball into his control.

Two time-outs in immediate succession (e.g. first team A, then team B) are not allowed, as these can only be taken "after one point".

4 Rally

4.1 Each rally starts with a service and ends with the following fault, the end of a set or half or a stoppage.

4.1.1 Following a fault, the serve passes to the team that has made the fault. Following a stoppage, the last service is repeated.

Note

The term "stoppage" denotes any stoppage that is not caused by violation of the rules, e.g. obstruction by spectators or violence between players.

Explanation of game interruption:

If an additional ball rolls into the field from outside, the game is only to be stopped if the flow of the game is disrupted, the player is hindered, or there is a risk of injury.

In the event of an injury, the referee can stop play at any time. In the event of an obvious injury that severely disables a player, he must stop play immediately. This allows the injured person to be treated and each team has the option of replacing one or more players.

The duration of the break in play must be kept as short as possible, with medical needs having absolute priority. This evaluation requires a great deal of sensitivity on the part of the referee.

4.2 Only faults during a rally are scored. (exception: clause 10.2.1)

Explanation of errors during gameplay:

If a substitute or coach enters the field of play during a game, a fault can only be recorded when the game is in progress (during a game). When a substitute or coach enters the field in between points, the referee can only verbally warn the individual or penalize with a card.

4.3 It is regarded as a fault if a player or the ball touches the net (ribbon/ string) or the posts during a rally.

4.4 Each ball that touches the ground outside the marked court is regarded as the fault of the team that touched it last.

If the ball touches a non-playing person, it is regarded as having touched the ground. It is regarded as the fault of the team that touched it last as is catching the ball within the buffer zone if the acting team has lost control over the ball. In all other cases, catching the ball is regarded as obstruction.

Explanation of touching the ball by non-players:

If a spectator or member of the Referee team touches the ball inside the buffer zone, it must be determined whether the team entitled to hit the ball could still have reached it.

If this is the case, a decision must be made on interference and the last point must be repeated. If this is not the case, it will result in a fault for the team that last touched the ball.

If a ball hits a substitute or coach inside the buffer zone without first bouncing on the ground, it will result in a fault for the team that the individual belongs to. Hitting a player/coach outside of the buffer zone does not produce a fault for the team that the individual belongs to.

4.5 It is regarded as a fault if a player enters the opponent's half during a rally without being directly involved in the rally.

Explanation entering the opposite field:

In principle, it is not permitted to enter the opposing field during a game. An exception is an unavoidable run out or the return of a ball that is indirectly under the net (line) has gotten into the opposite field. This is allowed.

5 Hit

5.1 The short period in which fist or arm touches the ball is referred to as a hit. The ball must not be pushed.

5.2 The ball may only be hit once with fist or arm.

5.3 The fingertips must touch the palm of the hand and the thumb must be positioned alongside the palm during each hit using the fist. If the contact with the ball is carried out with the arm, the hand may be opened.

6 Service

6.1 The service may be carried out by any player.

6.2 The player serving must throw the ball up visibly and hit it directly over the net (ribbon/string).

The service is deemed to have begun as soon as the ball has left the hand of a player with intent to serve and ends after the same player hits the ball.

Explanation of the ball must leave the release hand:

Some attackers play a short service, in which the ball is played after an extremely short throw (a few centimeters and milliseconds after the ball is thrown). Of course, this service is permissible if the ball has left the hand. Only when it is clearly "pushed out of the hand" is there a violation of the rules.

The same applies in the kid's game if a service is hit, in which the ball is hit from the hand holding the ball with almost no throw. The referee's job is to encourage the game and not interfere too much by interpreting the rules as narrowly as possible.

6.2.1 The service is valid if the ball touches the ground within the opponent's court-half or if it touches an opponent within or outside the opponent's half.

6.3 The service may be carried out running, jumping, standing or walking.

Explanation of service while running, jumping, standing or walking:

If a player lies, sits or kneels and plays the ball over the line from this position, this is not a valid service initiation. Therefore, play is stopped. No points are awarded and the service is re-attempted.

Running and jumping, however, are permissible only if the first ground-contact after the service is behind the service line.

If a standing player has lost contact to the ground during the service, the first ground contact must be behind the service line.

If a player that has lost ground contact during his serve touches the ground simultaneously with both feet (one foot in front of the service line – the other behind) after the service – this is NOT regarded as a fault.

A service by a standing player constitutes the initial ground contact if the stationary leg is not involved in the second ground contact.

A service by a walking player leads to a service carried out standing and is therefore permissible according to paragraph three.

Explanation of service / leg transfer:

To put it simply, the 3m area (including the service line) may only be entered when the ball has been hit and after hitting the ball there has been contact with the ground in front of the service line.

6.3.1 During the service no player of the serving team must be in the opponent's half.

6.3.2 The service line, the space between central and service line and the buffer zone must not be stepped on by the server prior to the first ground contact after the service behind the service line.

Explanation of service / Outside the field of play:

A service that is carried out from outside the playing field is not allowed just as a service while sitting, lying down or kneeling. Play is stopped and no points are awarded. The service must be re-attempted.

6.4 The service has to be started and carried out without any delay.

6.4.1 If a service has been initiated, but not carried out because the ball is not hit, this is regarded as a fault.

Explanation of started service:

If the ball leaves the throwing hand, the initiation is considered to have started. So if the ball is thrown and then caught or dropped on the ground, this is a fault. Of course, a bouncing of the ball, an unintentional "falling out of hand" or the ball being thrown by another player cannot be counted as an initiation of the service.

7 Return and Pass

7.1 Within each half, the ball

- may only be hit once by a player.
- may not be hit more often than three times altogether.
- may not touch the ground more than once before each contact.

7.1.1 If two players of a team hit the ball simultaneously, this is regarded as two contacts.

7.2 The return of the ball is valid if it is hit across the net (ribbon/string) and touches the ground within the opponent's court-half or touches an opponent inside or outside the court.

7.2.1 A ball which enters the opponent's half below the net (ribbon/string) in a direct hit turns into a fault when crossing the central line.

Explanation played right under the net:

The ball is void when it enters the opponent's airspace. Therefore:

- it can also no longer be played back directly,
- it is irrelevant whether the ball then hits an opponent in the opposite field.
- After a block that goes directly under the line, any further contact by e.g. players is irrelevant.

The ball is considered to have crossed the center line in the air, under the net, when the ball has completely crossed the vertical plane of the center line with its' full diameter.

7.3 A contact in the opponent's half by reaching over the net (ribbon/string) from one's own half is permissible.

7.4 A team is allowed to contact the ball which was hit by the opponent in the opponent's half, or which has touched the ground in the opponent's half but has not yet crossed over the net (ribbon/string).

7.5 The return of a ball back below the net (ribbon/string) is permissible if it has bounced from one's own half into the opponent's below the net (ribbon/string) and has not touched the ground yet.

Explanation Playback under the net:

In this situation, only the team that intends to play the ball back under the line is entitled to hit. They must therefore not be obstructed. If it can be determined that an attempt is being made to return the ball, but the ball is hit in a different direction, this is immediately to be evaluated as a direct hit under the net, i.e. as a mistake. Even if the ball hits a generic player there.

7.5.1 The return of a ball back from the opponent's half into one's own half over the net (ribbon/string) is regarded as a fault.

Explanation of playing back over the net:

It is not counted as being played back over the net if the ball comes out of your own court by reaching over the net.

Possible cases of playing in accordance with the rules, also from the opposing field:

- In a block situation, a player touches the ball in the opponents field over the net, but as the second player. The ball flies from his fist/arm into his own field or onto the ceiling in his own field; the team has two more touches of the ball and is allowed to continue playing.

- A defended ball bounces over the net, but the setter can play it by reaching over the net. A third contact is allowed, regardless of whether it is in the opponents field or in your own field. The explicit meaning of not being able to play the ball back over the net is that a ball that has bounced over the net may not be hit back over the net by running around the post or under the net.

- 7.5.2 A ball which has bounced from one's own half under the net into the opponent's must not be hit by the opponents before it has touched the ground. This rule does not apply if the ball has touched the ground in one's own half after the second contact.

Explanation without touching under the net:

This means that if the ball has already been hit twice and then goes under the net, it is considered a fault.

7.6 If the ball hits

- the net (ribbon/string),
- the posts,
- the central line
- or if it touches the ground outside the court
- or if it directly crosses the central line below the net (ribbon/string),

immediately after a block, this is not regarded as a fault. The last service is repeated.

Indoors

If the ball touches the ceiling or the wall outside the court after a block, this is not regarded as a fault. The last service is repeated.

Note

A block shall be defined as follows: if both players touch the ball simultaneously or - unnoticed by the referee - in extremely short succession.

- 7.6.1 Following a block, the team and the blocking player in whose half the ball has touched the ground may still hit the ball three times.

Explanation block:

The block is the most difficult situation for the referee, as many aspects must be perceived and evaluated in an extremely short time:

Location and course of the view at the block:

The best location is close to the post and positioned so that players involved in the block do not obstruct the view of the line. The referee should take this position immediately if a blocking situation is foreseeable. The referee should recognize this when the ball has left the setter's arm. It is also helpful to observe the attacker's announcement (direct or indirect set) in order to anticipate the game situation and prepare the best positioning.

Feet/Jump:

When the two attackers are in the immediate vicinity, the Referee also looks at the jump and landing of those involved in the block in order to determine whether entering the opposing field will result in an immediate hindrance or danger. Also, the referee should be aware of the potential danger of the landing area of each player and should award a point if the landing zone is compromised by either player.

Net/Line:

From player approach to landing after the attack or block, the net is monitored to determine if either the player or the ball hits the line. (Even after the ball has been played, the line must not be lost from sight, players can also touch the line when landing or after the ball has been hit.)

Ball:

Is the ball touched at the same time, or is a player noticeably earlier/later hitting the ball? This decision affects all subsequent actions. If there is a block, the referee indicates this to the teams by raising his fist.

- 7.7 If the ball has crossed the side line or the base line after a pass or return, it may still be hit as long as it doesn't touch the ground. The ball may be passed to another player or returned directly over the net (ribbon/string).
- 7.8 If one player is obstructed by an opponent, this is regarded as their point. If a player is still allowed to hit the ball, that player takes precedence and must not be obstructed in the opponent's court-half.
- 7.8.1 If the hindrance occurs unintentionally and through no fault of one's own (unavoidable due to the course of the game), it leads to a repetition of the last point.

Explanation unintentionally and through no fault of one's own:

The referee can clearly see that there was no intention to obstruct the game, but that it only resulted from the game situation and could not have been avoided or could hardly have been avoided by the player.

Example 1: A ball that has been defended close to the net is then set by the player in a dive or at full speed, after which the player slides into the opposite field and hinders the blocking player there.

Example 2: A ball passed quickly must be saved by the attacker in a dive or full run over the center line. When sliding into the opponents' field, the player hinders an opposing player who wants to defend or hit the ball.

→ Decision 1: Is there a hindrance, or was the progress of the game not significantly influenced by the collision? Whistle or let the game go.

→ Decision 2: Was there intent to interfere? Yes; point awarded. No; repeat the last service.

- 7.8.2 If a player or a rally is obstructed by spectators, referees or any other barriers within the court or the buffer zone, this is not regarded as a fault. The last service is repeated. Obstructions by members of their own team, substitutes or coaches are regarded as a fault.

Explanation players or spectators:

In order to be able to clearly allocate all persons, it is important to be clear before the game who is on the game report sheet as a team member (player, coach, manager) and who is not.

8 Scoring

- 8.1 Each fault counts as a point for the opposing team.
- 8.2 The points won are entered on a score card using Arabic numerals, in sequence.
- 8.2.1 Example:

A	1		2	3					4	5		6	7			8	9		10	11	A
B		1			2	3	4	5			6			7	8			9			B

9 Referees

- 9.1 Each match is supervised by at least one referee, being assisted by two linesmen and one scorer. A Video Assistant Referee "VAR" can be used. All video reviews will be initiated by the head referee and managed by a video referee.

Note: Further regulations in which more referees are used are defined in the "Competition Regulations". Their responsibilities are defined in the "IFA Referee Order".

- 9.2 The referee ensures that the rules are complied with and makes decisions at their own discretion. The Referee also may be assisted by the linesman.
Head referee decisions are undisputable.

Explanation of independent decisions:

In the end, only the referee decides on points awarded to each team. So the line judges don't make the decisions, they only give hints. The referee can either overrule them or make a different decision if the display differs.

Of course, it is only advisable to overrule a linesman in exceptional cases, since the linesman has a much better position in the case of out-of-bounds decisions and the referee actually challenges discussions by overruling.

- 9.2.1 Before the game, the referee makes sure that the playing field, the balls and the playing clothes are in the correct condition, ensures that the game report is correct and conducts the draw.

In the timed game, the referee also takes care of the timekeeping. Timing can also be done centrally, but the referee remains responsible for his field.

Explanation of central timing:

If the central timekeeper forgets to blow the whistle at half-time or the end of the game, the referee takes over. It is recommended to wait for the last 5 seconds to be announced before the final whistle. If this signal does not come, the referee must independently count and whistle so loudly that neighboring fields can also hear this and react accordingly.

- 9.2.2 The referee starts and ends the match and has the right to interrupt it and to discontinue it. The referee indicates interruptions, extra time and points by whistling, shouting or stepping onto the court.

The duration of the extra time must be announced immediately after the rally (interruption) or the delay.

- 9.2.3 Each point and its justification must be displayed. At the same time the referee points in the direction of the team that has won the point.

If the referee decides that the last service be repeated, this is indicated by pointing closed fists with thumbs up in the direction of both teams.

The referee supervises the scorer so as to ensure correct scoring and takes care that the score is constantly announced or displayed.

- 9.2.4 The referee stays outside the court during the match. Exception: see clause 9.2.2

- 9.2.5 The referee announces the result after the end of the match.

The referee, the scorer and the two captains have to witness the correctness of the entries in the score card by their signatures.

- 9.3 The linesmen stand at the corner points of the side-lines opposite the referee. They help the referee supervise the match and indicate when a ball touches the ground outside

the boundary lines through raising a flag or arm as well as pointing down (at the line) if the ball touches the boundary line or inside the court.

- 9.4 The scorer stands or sits close to the referee and scores the points for both teams following the referee's call.

10 Penalties

- 10.1 The referee has the right to punish unsportsman-like behavior in the following way according to the severeness of the offence:
- caution (yellow card)
 - suspension until both teams together have won 10 points (yellow and red card)
 - disqualification (red card)

General guidance on penalties:

The referee ensures that everyone involved in the game abides by the rules of the game and respects the idea of fair play in their behavior.

In order to ensure this, they have various options available from which they can choose the best possible deployment option depending on the situation.

The examples and situations described below provide orientation as to the appropriateness of the various punishment options.

A final "if-then instruction" cannot be given conclusively due to the variety of situations in the overall context of the game (emotions, overall process, previous events).

A situational assessment by the referee in the overall context of the game will always be the final assessment in order to recognize misconduct in the sense that further escalation is avoided and the person to be punished realizes that the behavior was unacceptable and that is the respective penalty.

Explanation cards:

If by mistake the referee does not have a card, the warning or the sending off can also be given without a card. Penalties can be issued until the game forms are completed and signed. In the case of later offenses, a report can be written to the responsible commission.

Behavior in the event of unsportsmanlike conduct:

The referee has the duty to verbally warn or warn players or support staff in the event of unsportsmanlike conduct and to exclude them from the game in serious or repeated cases. These measures must be taken after particularly careful consideration.

Examples for unsportsmanlike conduct

A good referee is a good mediator when it comes to knowing which measures will help to calm the situation and which measures are appropriate in the given situation.

In the case of unsportsmanlike conduct, the referee has the right to impose the following penalties, depending on the severity of the violation:

- Warning (yellow card)
- Time penalty (yellow-red >>> 10 total balls long)
- Field reference (red card)

Warnings and sending-offs can also be given to non-playing team members (coaches, managers, substitutes).

"Warning" (= yellow card)

(Enter the score, the name of the player and the reason for the warning in the match report!)

- **Game Delay**

Taking extra time when returning the ball and/or having multiple people be involved in returning the ball that it is excessive.

- Warning (Yellow Card) to the team. In the event of further delays, each time it happens is a point for the opponent (time game rule 6.4)

- Warning to the team captain if more than one player is involved

(This yellow card is not considered player-related, i.e. a further offense by the captain can still be a yellow card for him)

- Kicking the ball away or throwing it high in the air
- Insulting one's own teammates, opponents or spectators
- Loud emotional outbursts, also against oneself (e.g.: Swearing, kicking the post...)
- Criticizing the referee
- Unsportsmanlike behavior, e.g. wetting the ball with a wet jersey, taunting the opponent, verbal attacks, insinuations, walking back very slowly to your own position, possibly with your back to the opponent, repeated disruption during the game, internal team disputes, or similar.
- Deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior, for example in block situations (including disruptive gestures)
- Improper conduct towards the spectators/fans
 - Assault the referee / linesman
 - Overly emotional about decisions, especially if not the captain
 - Brash appearance towards the referee, also as captain
- Serving when the opponents back is facing them.

Time penalty - yellow-red card

"If a player is excluded for a total of 10 points, the time of the exclusion and the reason for the exclusion must be entered by the referee. A suspended player may not be replaced during this period. If another player is sent off the field during this time, the game must be stopped."

This time penalty can extend into the next set!

- Insulting (insulting, physical attack of players, officials, spectators, referees)
- Largely unsportsmanlike behavior (e.g. insulting criticism of the spectators/fans; making threats, verbal or gestural insults → stinky fingers...)
- Repetition of offenses under "Warning"

Field expulsion - red card

- Dangerous game (negligently injuring an opponent or an attempt to do so; also towards teammates)
- Consultation of the spectators/fans (physical attack, large insults)
- Spitting >>>> can also lead to the game being aborted!!!

Procedure for repeated violations:

If a player has already been sanctioned with a time penalty (= yellow-red card) earlier in the game, the player cannot be given the same or a lower penalty (yellow or yellow-red) for further offenses after returning to the field. If that player is guilty of another offense that the referee wants to sanction with a card, then this is mandatory a field expulsion (=red card).

Possibility of sanctions against spectators:

Spectators who disrupt the game excessively (not by cheering from the ranks, etc., but e.g. by invading the field, throwing objects onto the field, discriminatory behavior, etc.) receive a reprimand from the referee and must move away from the edge of the field or the stands (removal is the responsibility of the organizer). The match can be interrupted by the referee until the organizer has complied with the referee's request. If the organizer does not comply with this

request, the referee can stop the game. The organizing organization of the game decides on the resulting penalty.

10.1.1 A suspended player may not be replaced during the time of the suspension.

If the team that received the suspension does not have the right to serve after the rally following the suspension, the referee interrupts the match in order to enable the team to complete according to clause 2.1.2 paragraph 3.

If during a suspension a second player is suspended or disqualified, the match must be broken off according to clause 2.1.

Explanation of time penalty:

In the case of a time penalty, it makes sense to mark the game report after 10 points.

10.1.2 A player who has been disqualified may not be replaced in the same match.

10.1.3 Trainer and manager may be penalized for unsportsmanlike behavior by caution (yellow card) or disqualification (red card).

Explanation of field reference trainer/manager:

In the latter case, they have to go into the spectator area and are no longer allowed to coach the players.

10.2 The referee cautions the team at the first sign of delaying tactics (clauses 2.1.3 or 6.4). The caution is announced to the team's captain.

Explanation of warning against team:

Before Rule 6.4 can come into effect, a warning (yellow card) must be issued to the team captain against the team.

The warning should usually be preceded by at least one verbal warning - "Please play".

This interaction occurs when a player takes a longer time than normal to continue the game.

10.2.1 All further delaying tactics are punished by a point for the opponent. (punishment ball).

10.2.2 In a match with time limits, the sum of all delays has to be added as extra time.

Further information and explanations for referees:

Tasks during the game

Neutral decision-making:

The referee makes decisions based on visual perception and cannot be influenced by players, support staff or spectators. Hearing can only confirm the correctness of his visual perception. The more certain a referee is about a decision made, the stronger this decision can be represented.

Of course, a referee is also human and therefore makes mistakes. A good referee is characterized by keeping these errors to a minimum. If a referee immediately recognizes his wrong decision, or if a player admits an unrecognized mistake, he can revise it.

However, if a referee has made a decision based on his perception, he will not overturn it on protest.

The most important thing when making a decision is:

Every point must be clearly and safely documented by a whistle.

The referee monitors the records in the game form.

The scorer's record should be checked at regular intervals.

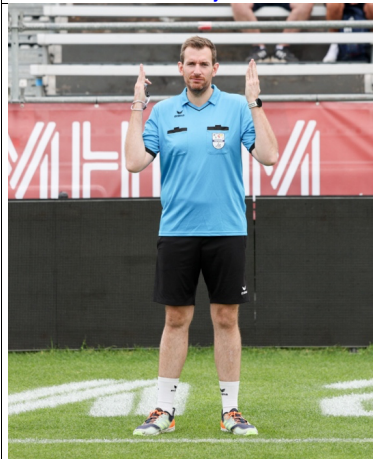
Signaling of a point gesture

The referee whistles to indicate game interruptions due to errors and explains his decision with official hand signals.

Especially in indoor games, where the spectators very often loudly exceed the referee's voice, but also because of the better understanding of spectators and players, it is necessary to work clearly with gestures. In addition to the clear short whistle for all errors, the gestures must always support the following:

1. Ball is out

Both hands open, hands facing backwards, arms bent, pointing backwards next to the head. Then one arm is raised horizontally in the direction of the team that scored a point.



2. Body

A hand points/taps the part of the body touched by the ball. The second arm points horizontally, in the direction of the team that scored a point.

Note: If the foot is hit, the hand points to the foot or thigh and, if necessary, a verbal supplement "foot". The referee should not be put in a "ridiculous position" by gestures.



3. Net

An outstretched arm with an open hand points in the direction of the net. The second arm points horizontally, in the direction of the team that scored a point



4. Foot Fault

An outstretched arm with an open hand points toward the specification line. The second arm points horizontally, in the direction of the team that scored a point.



5. Double bounce

The stretched arm points downwards with two spread fingers. The second arm points horizontally, in the direction of the team that scored a point.



6. Time out or other game interruption

A bent arm points upwards with an open hand, the other open hand is placed in the middle over the vertical hand (time out).



7. Block

The right or left stretched arm is held vertically upwards with a closed fist.



8. Repetition of last Service

Both arms point horizontally outwards, thumbs point upwards.



9. Substitution

The substitution is to be signaled by circling both hands above the head.



10. Ball was close in

If a ball has just landed sharply in the field, one or both hands point to the ground.



11. Under the net

If a ball bounces under the net, the trajectory of the ball is to be shown with an open hand, the palm of the hand pointing upwards, and the arm around the mid-section of the body pointing horizontally. The second arm points horizontally, in the direction of the team that scored a point.



12. Over the net

If a ball bounces over the net, the trajectory of the ball is to be shown with an open hand, the palm of the hand pointing downwards, and the arm overhead pointing horizontally. The second arm points horizontally, in the direction of the team that scored a point.



13. Ceiling

If the ball touches the ceiling after a return hit, both hands with open palms point upwards. The second arm then points horizontally in the direction of the team that scored a point.



14. Interference

In the case that one player interferes with another, or there is a separate interference from a spectator for instance, the referee will make both hands into fists outside the body frame and connect them horizontally by the chest to indicate a collision. Either a point is awarded, and one arm is raised horizontally in the direction of the team that scored a point or a repetition of service signal is shown.



15. Unsportsmanlike conduct

A physical card will be vertically shown to the guilty party. Information related to the card will be written in the game report.



16. Assistants

Out



didn't see / can't decide



Ball is in and after that hit the wall.



Objections:

Objections - including those against factual decisions - must be noted immediately on the game report.

Questions from team captain:

The referee must answer questions from the team captain - in the case of youth teams, if necessary, an adult supervisor. He gives the answer briefly and clearly and does not allow any discussion.

Behavior in critical situations:

Certainly every referee will come into situations in which he may have made one or more wrong decisions.

Tip 1: If I find out that I made a wrong decision, I can easily take it back if the course of the game allows it. If this is no longer possible, I still try to stay calm, breathe deeply and master upcoming situations well.

Tip 2: In the event of inquiries (protesting) by the team captain, the referee will explain how the situation was perceived to explain why the decision was made. The referee can certainly concede that this perception could of course have been wrong, but that he will nevertheless stand by his decision as a player's complaint is not a basis for reversing a decision. He does not enter into any discussions about this; if necessary, react with a verbal warning or warning (yellow card).

If the game escalates or the referee feels threatened by spectators, the referee must give the team captains or the organizer the necessary instructions. In any case, the referee is obliged to take all measures that enable the competition to be ended without complaint.

The location of the linesmen:

The position on the opposite sidelines changes with every rally.

The linesman who is on the same side as the player serving or attacking primarily observes that sideline. The linesmen should orientate slightly forward for a better line view, but only so far that the position on the back line can be reached in time in the event of a return hit.

The other linesman stands in the extension of the back line and primarily observes this back line. If the other linesmen can clearly decide a ball on the sidelines, the linesmen should match the gesture with the flag. If the counterpart cannot see the ball clearly and does not indicate anything, the linesmen should indicate according to what the perception from their view was.

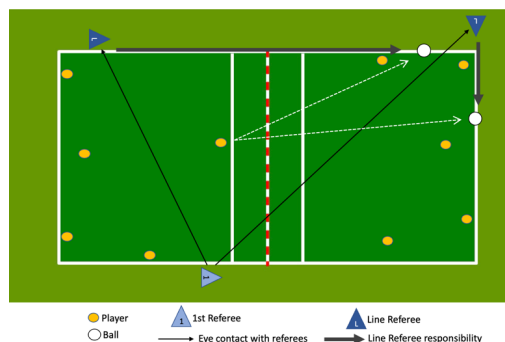
When changing attack or service, the two positions switch.

For balls that are out, the flag (arm) is stretched vertically upwards. In the case of close balls that are in, the flag is stretched diagonally downwards in the direction of the field.

If a linesman cannot recognize the situation "ball out", e.g. because the view was blocked by a player, the flag (both arms) must be held horizontally in front of the body.

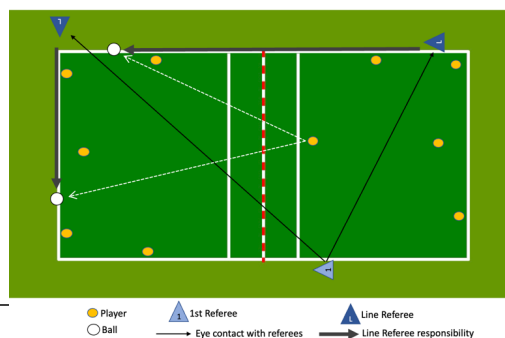
9.3.1.1 Continuous location change with defense and attack. The position on the opposite sidelines changes with every rally.

The best location of line referee 1



The linesman who is making the call or attack stands slightly ahead of the side line and primarily observes this side line. The counterpart stands in the extension of the back line and primarily observes this back line. The two positions switch when attacking or service changes to the other team.. (2)
 For balls that are out, the flag (arm) is stretched vertically upwards by the "near linesman". The counterpart acknowledges this with a short delay and matches the gesture. In no case should the counterpart react first.

The best location of line referee 2



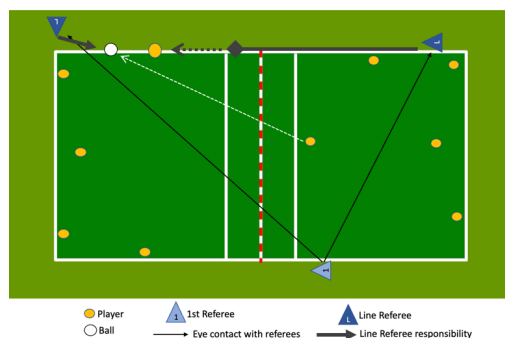
In the case of close balls that are in, the flag and the second arm (both out-stretched arms) are stretched diagonally downwards in the direction of the field. If the "secondary linesman" discovers that his colleague has definitely made a mistake in his decision, he can indicate this to the referee.

If a linesman cannot recognize the situation "ball out", e.g. because the view was blocked by a player, the flag (both arms) must be held horizontally in front of the body. (3)

recognize the situation either, this is indicated by holding the flag horizontally in front of his chest. Then the referee takes responsibility.

In this case, the counterpart takes responsibility. If the counterpart cannot

The best location of line referee 3



Peculiarities in the hall or touching the defending team:
 If a ball bounces in the field and then touches the wall of the hall, the linesman points the flag into the field and raises his other arm vertically. The same signaling occurs when the ball flies out of bounds and the defending team has touched the ball.

Scorer table:

At the scorer's table there is only the scorer and possibly one other person operating a scoreboard. Under no circumstances should alcoholic beverages or

similar be placed there. The scorer also records all other entries associated with the match report.

