

# **LATEST FROM FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA**

Laws of the Game & Technical Updates

25 January 2025

# GK 8 Seconds

## Law Changes

1. **GK 8 Seconds**
2. Inadvertent Interference
3. Dropped Ball Restarts
4. Double Touch PKs

## Interpretations

1. Managing Yellow Cards
2. Second Yellow Cards
3. Upper Body Contact
4. Holding
5. Handball
6. Captains Only
7. Allowance for Time Lost

### GOALKEEPER 8 SECONDS

#### Law 12.2

A corner kick is awarded if a goalkeeper controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than 8 seconds before releasing it

#### Goalkeeper has clear control of ball

A goalkeeper is in control when:

- Holding the ball in hands/arms
- Ball is held between any surface
- Holding the ball on an outstretched open hand(s)
- Bouncing it on the ground
- Throwing it in the air

#### 8-second countdown starts

- The referee will countdown from 8 seconds, using a raised hand for the final 5 seconds

#### Exceeds 8 seconds = Corner kick

- If the goalkeeper exceeds 8 seconds, the referee will award a corner kick on the side of the field nearest to the goalkeeper

#### Refereeing practice

- Referee decides when the count starts – sensible application
- The count starts when the goalkeeper is in full control of the ball and completely unobstructed by any opponent
- If the goalkeeper is starting to release the ball as the countdown ends do not penalise
- If during counting process an attacking player pressures or prevents the goalkeeper releasing the ball, an indirect free kick against the attacking player will be awarded



**1st offence:**  
corner kick  
only

**2nd offence:**  
corner kick +  
warning

**3rd offence:**  
corner kick +  
yellow card

**How do you avoid it – Pre-Match – Talk to the GKs  
Teamwork if on Comms – an AR counts 8, 7, 6 audibly for ref via comms**

# GOALKEEPER 8 SECOND – SIGNALS AND COUNT

Watch the goalkeeper 8 second video in the folder.

- The referee must count 8 – 7 – 6 in their head
- When match officials are wearing comms, the closest AR should 8 – 7 – 6 via the comms
- The referee then picks up the count from 5 and verbalises this to the players
- The referee must make the counting signal as per the video (including bringing the arm down to the chest to indicate a change in the number of fingers being held up)



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## INADVERTENT INTERFERENCE

### Law 9.2

If, without intending to interfere with play unfairly, a team official, substitute, substituted or sent-off player or player who is temporarily off the field of play (injury, adjusting equipment etc.) touches the ball while it is still in play but when it is clearly leaving the field of play, this is penalised with an indirect free kick; there is no sanction

Inadvertent  
Interference



Indirect FK

Clear/deliberate  
and impactful  
interference



Direct FK or PK  
+ Red Card

# Dropped Ball Restarts

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Play stopped  
with ball **inside**  
penalty area

Dropped ball  
to goalkeeper

Play stopped  
with ball **outside**  
penalty area

Dropped ball  
from where play  
stopped, to the  
team that had or  
would have had  
possession.

# Double Touch Penalty Kick

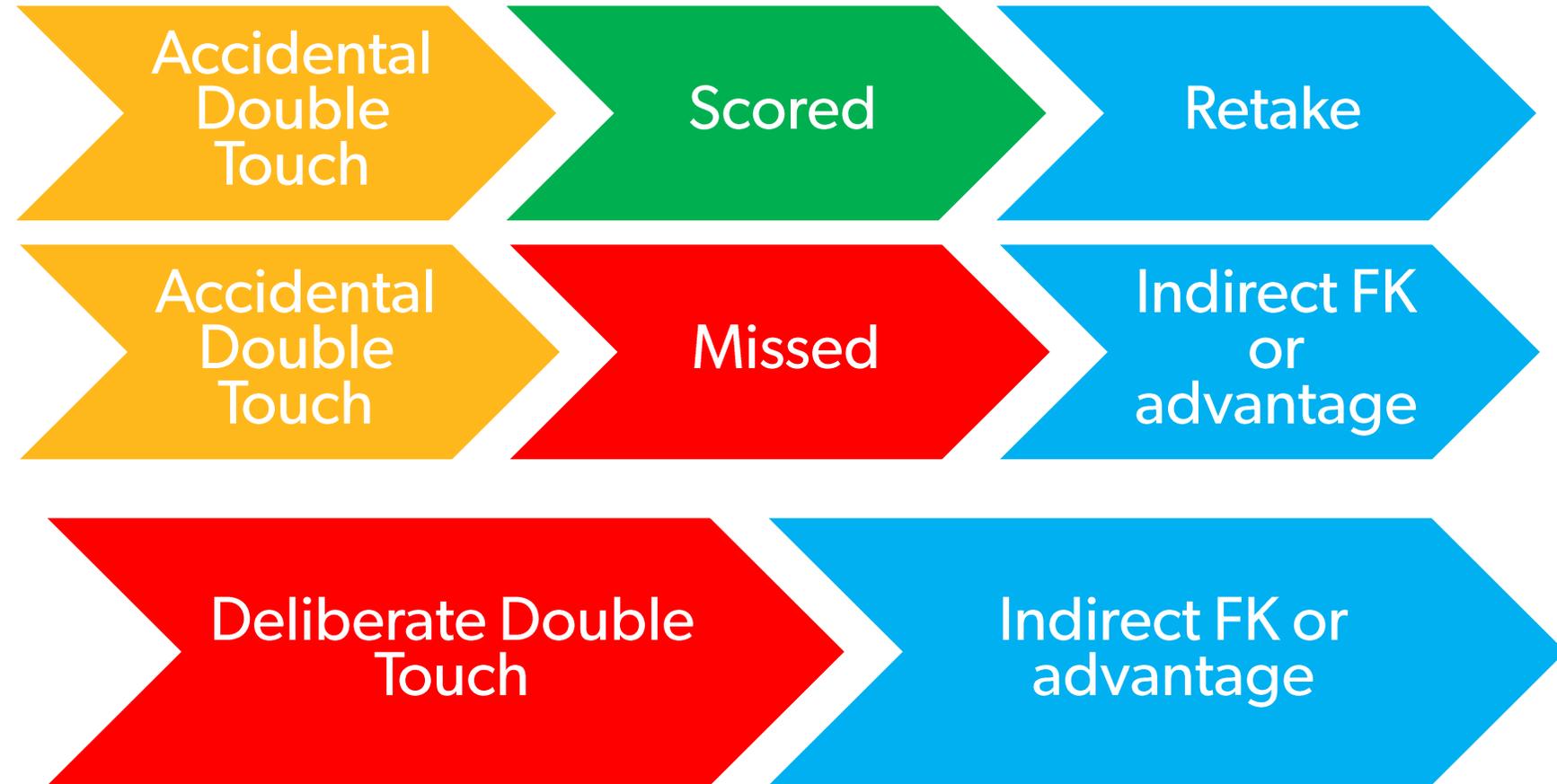


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**Who has the primary role to spot this at a PK?**

# Managing Yellow Cards

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Managing Yellow Cards is not an excuse to avoid giving necessary Yellow Cards. The following are examples of offences that must be sanctioned appropriately:

**Any Reckless Tackle**

**A Blatant/Cynical tactical foul**

**Any Act of Dissent**

**A clear/deliberate action that is impactful in delaying the restart of play**

You can manage only when the match and the considerations for the offence allow (and you should manage IF YOU CAN).

# Second Yellow Cards

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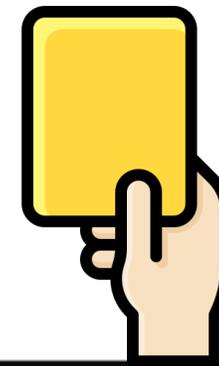
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Following a first yellow card any subsequent foul will **NOT ALWAYS** result in a second caution

Referees should judge each foul following a caution **independently**, whilst also considering whether the player is **persistently offending**

**Clear yellow card offences should ALWAYS be sanctioned** on-field, no matter whether the player is already cautioned



# Upper Body Contact

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3. **Upper Body Contact**
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### Guiding principles

- Contact is an acceptable part of football – not every contact is a foul
- The level of contact and its impact
- Consider the defender's actions and attacker's actions (motivation)
- Emphasis of protecting player safety

### Considerations

- Does the defender make a challenge?
- Is the ball played? By whom?
- Who makes the contact?
- Does the attacker instigate contact?

**Actions of  
defender**

**Actions  
(motivation)  
of attacker**

**Degree of  
contact**

**Consequence  
of contact**



# Holding

A holding offence occurs only when a player's contact with an opponent's body or equipment impedes the opponent's movement

## Principles

- Referees will continue to consider the nature and impact of the action

## Key terms

- **Material impact**  
Opportunity for opponent to challenge for or play the ball
- **Non-footballing action**  
An action that is clearly not an attempt to challenge for or play the ball
- **Extremeness of action**  
Degree to which a holding action is a non-footballing act
- **Mutual holding**  
Players engaged in simultaneous and similar actions – play on is the preferred outcome in most cases

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**Acts of holding that have clear material impact and/or are extreme non-footballing actions must be penalised**

## Examples

1. **Sustained** and/or **impactful** holding
2. **Clear impact** on the opponent's opportunity to play or challenge for the ball
3. **Clear (extreme) non-footballing action with impact on the opponent's movement**
4. **Not looking at the ball**, only focusing on opponent and not challenging for the ball
5. Holding an opponent with **both arms**

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## TIPS

1. Consider the match temperature
2. Manage early at Corner Kicks – set an expectation that you will be watching whether the players' eyes are on the ball or only on the opponent.
3. Don't use phrases like "high bar" or "threshold" or "for me" with players and coaches in relation to this. Use simple language like "Not enough" or "Needs to be stronger" or "He/She started it". Be truthful. Understand why you didn't give it.
4. Different considerations apply to trips and lower body contact

# Handball

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### HANDBALL

#### Interpretation

##### Principles

- Not every touch of a player's hand/arm with the ball is an offence
- Hand/arm position should be judged in relation to body movement in that particular situation
- Players are not expected to move with their arms by their side or behind their back

#### Interpretation

- A very clear deflection that results in a significant change in trajectory of the ball should carry greater weight than arm position when considering a handball offence
- However, touching another body part before contact with the arm does not automatically mean a handball cannot be penalised

#### No handball offence:

- Justifiable position/action
- Supporting arm
- Player plays ball onto own arm
- Clear change of direction when touched by same player
- Played by a teammate
- Close proximity

#### Handball offence:

- Deliberate movement of arm away from body
- Clear additional arm movement
- Arm position makes body bigger and is unjustifiable



### HANDBALL

#### Accidental handball

It is an offence if a player scores in the opponents' goal:

- Directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper
- Immediately after the ball has touched their hand/arm, even if accidental

#### Mitigating factors

- Goal not immediate
- Goal scored by a teammate
- Ball not entering goal; however action of a defender results in an 'own goal'

# Captains Only

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### Law 3.10 (Team captain)

Only captain approaching the referee

#### Principles

- Normal interactions between all players and the referee are allowed and remain important
- Referee may invite captain and provide an explanation (not justification) for an important decision
- Captains are responsible for helping to direct their teammates away from the referee
- When the captain is a goalkeeper, a nominated outfield player may be invited by the referee

#### In Practice

- Referee to use clear 'stop' gesture with hand/arm
- Referee to invite captain only – gesture to imaginary 'armband'
- Referee to explain (not justify) an important decision
- Unacceptable behaviour by players, including the captain, and/or a teammate ignoring a captain's request will continue to be dealt with robustly



**Does not directly apply to NSW Competitions as not in Comp Regs  
Strongly recommended it is used by refs as a management technique in  
any case**

# Allowance for time lost

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### CALCULATION OF ADDITIONAL TIME

More accurate calculation of additional time in line with IFAB guidance to enhance effective playing time.

Incident	2025/26 approach
Goal	Added time clock to start after 30 secs
Substitution	Exact time (play stopped to restart)
Injury	Exact time (play stopped to restart)
Penalty kick	Exact time (award to restart)
Delaying 2restart/ time wasting (e.g. 'ceremonial' free kicks, goal kicks)	Referee to make allowance based on match events
Red card	Exact time (red card shown to restart)