



# FOOTBALL RULES AND INTERPRETATIONS

**2024 EDITION**

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ISBN: 978-1-4475-9156-6

## Foreword

The rules are revised each year by IFAF to improve the sport's level of safety and quality of play, and to clarify the meaning and intent of rules where needed. The principles that govern all rule changes are that they must:

- be safe for the participants;
- be applicable at all levels of the sport;
- be coachable;
- be administrable by the officials;
- maintain a balance between offense and defense;
- be interesting to spectators;
- not have a prohibitive economic impact; and
- retain some affinity with the rules adopted by NCAA in the USA.

IFAF statutes require all member federations to play by IFAF rules, except in the following regards:

1. national federations may adapt Rule 1 to meet local needs and circumstances, provided no adaption reduces the safety of the players or other participants; BAFA takes advantage of that to allow (for example) 90-yard fields and reduced end zones that are our solution to using rugby pitches and the like;
2. competitions may adjust the rules according to (a) the age group of the participants and (b) the gender of the participants;
3. competition authorities have the right to amend certain specific rules (listed on page 12);
4. national federations may restrict the above so that the same regulations apply to all competitions under their jurisdiction.

These rules apply to all contests involving BAFA-affiliated teams and take effect from 1st March 2024. (**Exception:** Competitions that began before 1st March 2024 will continue to use 2023 rules until the end of their competition).

BAFA has established a Rules Committee to discuss and decide future changes to this book. The Committee is also our liaison to IFAF on rules matters. You may make suggestions for changes at any time, but to be eligible for consideration for the following year they must be received by 31st August.

Dr Jim Briggs (Editor)  
on behalf of the  
BAFA Rules Committee

Those who find it necessary to write to the editor for interpretations of rules or play situations will receive prompt replies if they number their questions and email them to [rules@britishamericanfootball.org](mailto:rules@britishamericanfootball.org).

The editor would like to thank the following people who assisted in the production of this edition of the rulebook:

Sergio Avila (Mexico), Jeff Batzler (Sweden), Nic Bevan (Great Britain), Tom Blakeson (Great Britain), Amir Brooks (Great Britain), Alan Christopher (Great Britain), Daniel Coles (Great Britain), Erik De Boeck (Belgium), Steve Egan (Great Britain), Will Fazackerley (Great Britain), James Ford-Bannister (Great Britain), Ignacio Galasso (Argentina), Flavio Garlaschi (Italy), David Gutteridge (Great Britain), Daniel Harries Davies (Great Britain), Perttu Hautala (Finland), Thomas Hofbauer (Austria), Jonathan Ireland (Great Britain), Radek Janhuba (Finland), Mark Looi (Australia), Andrea Lopez Rubio (Spain), Andrew Lovell (Great Britain), Ben Lovell (Great Britain), Alistair May (Great Britain), Gerry Mellough (Great Britain), Paul Mercer (Australia), Richard Moger (Great Britain), Dave Moore (Great Britain), Emma Payne (Great Britain), Juan Perez-Canto (France), Elisey Rodriguez, Alexandre Roger (France), Hubert Romanczyk (Poland), Michal Rosival (Czechia), Owen Samuels (Great Britain), Mark Schofield (Great Britain), Ian Sneddon (Great Britain), Paul Sutton (Great Britain), Marcin Szczepanski (Poland), Pete Thom (Great Britain), Frank Thomson (Great Britain), Simon Waterfield (Great Britain), Ozan Emre Yazici (Turkey)

## Table of Contents

Rules changes.....	4
Points of emphasis .....	7
The Football Code.....	10
BAFA Regulations .....	13
1 Basic principles.....	13
2 Registration.....	17
3 Code of conduct .....	19
4 Regulations on organisations .....	26
5 Game regulations .....	29
6 Competition complaints and appeals .....	31
7 Procedures for regulatory cases .....	31
8 Procedures for appeals .....	34
9 Grievance Procedure.....	35
Rules and Interpretations .....	40
Rule 1 — The Game, Field, Players and Equipment.....	42
Rule 2 — Definitions .....	62
Rule 3 — Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions .....	82
Rule 4 — Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds.....	105
Rule 5 — Series of Downs, Line to Gain .....	111
Rule 6 — Kicks.....	115
Rule 7 — Snapping and Passing the Ball .....	131
Rule 8 — Scoring.....	148
Rule 9 — Conduct of Players and Others Subject to the Rules.....	158
Rule 10 — Penalty Enforcement .....	182
Rule 11 — The Officials: Jurisdiction and Duties.....	191
Rule 12 — Video judge.....	192
Rule 13 — Standards for Game Management .....	197
Summary of penalties .....	213
Officials' Signals.....	225
Appendix A — Guidelines for Game Officials for Serious On-Field Player Injuries.....	228
Appendix B — Guidelines for Game Officials and Game Management To Use Regarding Lightning.....	229
Appendix C — Concussions.....	231
Appendix D — Field Diagrams .....	233
Appendix E — Equipment: Additional Details .....	240
BAFRA Terms and Conditions .....	240
Index of Rules and Interpretations .....	247