

## LAW 11: OFFSIDE

### It is NOT an offence in itself to be in an offside position

#### A player is an offside position if:

- he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent.
  - 'Nearer to his opponents' goal line' means that any part of a players head, body or feet is nearer to his opponents goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent. The arms are not included in this definition.

#### A player is NOT in an offside position if:

- he is in his own half or
- he is level with the second last opponent or
- he is level with the last two opponents

#### There is NO offence if a player receives the ball directly from:

- a goal kick
- a throw-in
- a corner-kick

\* In the event of an offside offence, the referee awards an indirect free-kick to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

A player in an offside position is only penalised if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by:

#### 1. Interfering with play

- means: playing or touching the ball passed or touched by a team-mate

#### 2. Interfering with an opponent

- means: preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by
  - i. clearly obstructing the opponents line of vision or movements, or
  - ii. making gestures or movements that distract or deceive an opponent

#### 3. Gaining an advantage by being in that position

- Means: a player in an offside position ONLY gains an advantage when the ball REBOUNDS:
  - i. Off the goalpost or crossbar
  - ii. Off an opponent

\* A player in an offside position may be penalised BEFORE playing or touching the ball if, in the opinion of the Assistant Referee, no other team mate, in an onside position, has the opportunity to play the ball. (Reduces frustration and anger.)

\* Any defending player leaving the field of play for any reason without the referee's permission shall be considered to be on his own goal line for the purposes of offside until the next stoppage in play. If the player leaves the field of play deliberately, he must be cautioned when the ball is out of play next.

\* It is not an offence in itself for a player who is in an offside position to step off the field of play to show the referee that he is not involved in active play. However, if the referee considers that he has left the field of play for tactical reasons and has gained an unfair advantage by re-entering the field of play, the player must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour. The player needs to ask for the referee's permission to re-enter the field.

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