



Small Sided Laws of the Game

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Play. Inspire. Unite.

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Introduction

The following Laws of the Small Sided Game are the Laws for use in Small Sided Games in the Province of Ontario. These Laws were revised based on the following principles:

To better reflect the game that is being played in many venues, leagues and competitions across Ontario.

- To apply simplify the understanding of the game for both players and referees.
- To improve the technical quality of play in the small-sided game.
- To encourage participation and enjoyment in a safe and controlled environment.

Underlined content indicates Law Amendments.



Law 1: The Field of Play

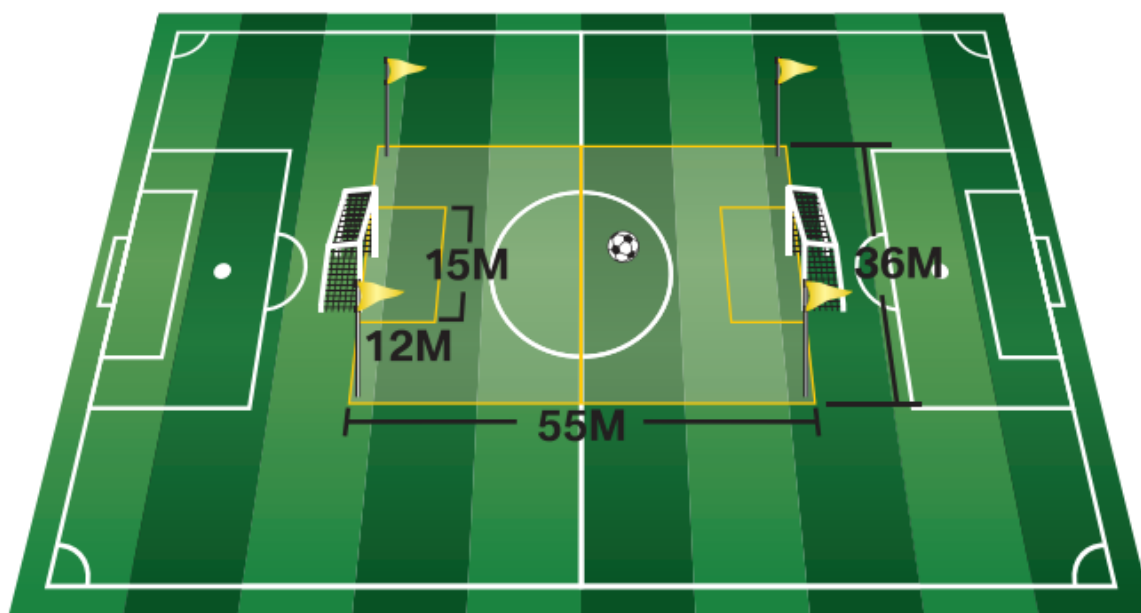
Field Markings

The field of play must be rectangular and marked with lines or flat field markers. The lines or markers belong to the areas of which they are boundaries.

The two longer lines are called the touch lines; the two shorter lines are called the goal lines.

The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line, which joins the midpoint of the two touch lines.

The field and goal dimensions as outlined below shall be considered as desirable guidelines. Failure to conform to the recommended field and goal dimensions shall not be the subject of protest. It is understood and agreed that clubs / teams may be unable to provide the desired fields, equipment, etc. Flexibility is understood and allowed.



Dimensions

The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touch line must be greater than the length of the goal line. Recommended field dimensions are as follows:

Width	Length
30 m – 36 m (98.42ft – 118.11ft)	40 m – 55 m (131.23ft – 180.44ft)

The Corner Area

The corner area is defined by a quarter circle with a radius of 1 m (1 yd) from each corner flag post drawn inside the field of play. Corner flags are mandatory.



The Goal Area

The goal area is the same as the penalty area.

The Penalty Area

Two lines are drawn at right angle to the goal line, five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from the inside of each goal post. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of twelve (12) metres and are joined by a line parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area.

Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made nine (9) metres (or ten (10) yards) from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them.

Penalty Arc

An **optional** penalty arc with radius five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flag Posts

A flag post, not less than 1.5 m high, with a non-pointed top and a flag must be placed in each corner.

Goals

A goal must be placed on the centre of the goal line.

A goal consists of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar or two flat markers equidistant from the corner flag.

The size for goals are as followed:

Width	Height
4.8m (16 ft)	1.8m (6 ft)

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this safety requirement.



Law 2: The Ball

Size 4 balls or 5 light balls can be used.

Requirements for balls size 5 light:

Requirement	Circumference
Shape	Spherical
Composition	Leather or Suitable Material
Weight	350-370g
Circumference	68-70cm
Pressure	8.5 lbs/sq. in – 15.6 lbs/sq. in 0.6 – 1.1 atmosphere

If a ball becomes defective during the match, the match is stopped until a replacement ball is found. Play is restarted by dropping the replacement ball at the place where the original ball became defective.

Law 3: The Players

A match is played between two teams where one of the players on the field must be designated as the goalkeeper. The minimum, maximum number of players and roster size are listed below:

Minimum number of players	Maximum number of players	Maximum Roster Size
5	7	12

If at any time during the game the number of players available to play drops below the minimum, the game shall be stopped.

Substitutions

Unlimited substitutions may be made throughout the game. All substitutions are only allowed at the discretion of the Referee and the Referee shall be advised of all substitutions.

Substitutions may be made on any stoppage.

Infringements and Sanctions

If a substitute or substituted player enters the field of play without the referee's permission:

- The referee stops play (although not immediately if the substitute or substituted player does not interfere with play)
- The player shall leave the field of play
- If the referee has stopped play, it is restarted with an indirect free kick or a penalty kick for the opposing team from the position of the ball at the time of the stoppage.



Goal Scored with an Extra Person on the Field of Play

If, after a goal is scored, the referee realizes, before play restarts, an extra person was on the field of play when the goal was scored:

The referee must disallow the goal if the extra person was:

- A player, substitute, substituted player, sent off player or team official of the team that scored the goal
- An outside agent who interfered with play unless a goal results as outlined above in 'extra persons on the field of play. The coach and other officials named on the team list (with the exception of players or substitutes) are team officials. Anyone not named on the team list as a player, substitute or team officials is an outside agent.
- Play is restarted with a goal kick, corner kick or dropped ball.

The referee must allow the goal if the extra person was:

- A player, substitute, substituted player, sent off player or team official of the team that conceded the goal
- An outside agent who did not interfere with play

If play is stopped by interference from:

- A team official, substitute, substituted or sent off player, play restarts with an indirect free kick or penalty kick
- An outside agent, play restarts with a drop ball

If the ball is going into the goal and the interference does not prevent a defending player playing the ball, the goal is awarded if the ball enters the goal (even if the contact was made with the ball) unless the ball enters the opponents' goal.

If, after a goal is scored, the referee realizes, after play restarts, an extra person was on the field of play when the goal was scored, the goal cannot be disallowed. The referee must:

- Stop play
- Have the extra player leave field of play
- Restart with a drop ball or free kick as appropriate

The referee must report the incident to appropriate authorities.



Law 4: The Players' Equipment

Players shall not wear anything which endangers themselves or other players.

Basic compulsory equipment shall consist of:

- A jersey or shirt with sleeves – Pinnies are also accepted
- Shorts
- Socks
- Appropriate footwear
- Shin guards

Shin guards:

- Must be completely covered by the socks
- Are to be made of rubber, plastic or a similar suitable material
- Must provide a reasonable degree of protection

Colours:

- The two teams must wear colours that distinguish them from each other and also the referee.
- Each goalkeeper must wear colours which are distinguishable from all outfield players and the referee. Pinnies / bibs are recommended to save jersey switching.

Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

A player who is asked to leave the field of play because of defective or dangerous equipment may not re-enter the field of play until the referee is satisfied that the equipment is permissible. The equipment may only be inspected during a stoppage in play

Jewellery is not permitted and cannot be taped. Medic Alert bracelets and necklaces are the exception provided that they are fastened securely so as not to bring danger to any other player. The referee should be aware of any player that is wearing one of these.

Any hair apparel must be of soft fabric, no plastic or metal items are to be worn.

Sports hijabs / headscarves are permitted.

Referees have the final say on the safety of equipment.



Law 5: The Referee

The Authority of the Referee

Each match is controlled by a CSA accredited Referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Small Sided Game. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored and the result of the match, is final.

Powers and Duties

The Referee:

- Enforces the Laws of the Small Sided Game
- Ensures that any ball used meets the requirements of Law 2
- Ensures that the players' equipment meets the requirements of Law 4
- Acts as timekeeper and keeps a record of the match
- Stops, suspends or abandons the match, at his/her discretion, for any infringements of the Laws
- Stops, suspends or abandons the match because of outside interference of any kind
- Stops the match if a player is injured and ensures that he is removed from the field of play. An injured player may only return to the field of play after the match has restarted.
- Ensures that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from the referee, who must be satisfied that the bleeding has stopped.
- Takes action against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and may, at his/her discretion, expel them from the field of play and its immediate surrounds
- Ensures that no unauthorised persons enter the field of play
- Indicates the restart of the match after it has been stopped
- Provides the appropriate authorities with a match report, which includes information on any disciplinary action taken against players and/or team officials and any other incidents that occurred before, during or after the match.

Law 6: The Other Match Officials

There shall be no assistant referees on 7v7 games.



Law 7: The Duration of the Match

Periods of Play

The match shall consist of 2, 25 minute halves and not exceed 50 minutes.

Half-time Interval

Players are entitled to a half time interval of 5 minutes.

Allowance for Time Lost

Allowance is made in either period for all time lost through:

- Substitutions
- Assessment of injured players
- Removal of injured players from the field of play
- Wasting time
- Any other cause

The allowance for time lost is at the discretion of the referee. The referee shall not compensate for a timekeeping error during the first half by increasing or reducing the length of the second half.

Law 8: The Start and Restart of Play

Definition of Kick-Off

A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting play:

- At the start of a match
- After a goal has been scored
- At the start of the second half
- At the start of each period of extra time, where applicable

A goal may be scored directly from a kick-off.

Procedure

Before the kickoff at the start of the match

- A coin toss is held by the referee between the coaches of each team
- The team that wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half
- The other team takes the kick-off to start the match
- The team that wins the toss takes the kick-off to start the second half of the match
- In the second half of the match, the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals

Kick-off

- After a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by the other team
- All players must be in their own half of the field
- The opponents of the team taking the kickoff must be five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) away from the ball until it is in play
- The ball must be stationary on the centre mark



- The referee gives a signal
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves
- The kicker must not touch the ball again until it is touched by another player

Infringements and Sanctions

For any infringements included below, the kick-off is retaken.

- Players not in their own half
- Opponents encroaching within five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) of the ball
- Players encroaching into opposing half
- Ball not on center mark or clearly moved
- Kick-off taken before signal
- Kicker touches the ball a second time with their feet

The kick-off procedure is re-started with an Indirect Free Kick if the kicker:

- Touches the ball a second time with their hands

Definition of Dropped Ball

A dropped ball is a method of restarting play when, while the ball is still in play, the referee is required to stop play temporarily for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Laws of the Small Sided Game. Some examples of this are an injury or interference by an outside agent.

Procedure

The referee drops the ball at the place where it was located when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the penalty area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Play restarts when the ball touches the ground.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a Drop Ball

Infringements and Sanctions

The ball is dropped again:

- If it is touched by a player before it makes contact with the ground
- If the ball leaves the field of play after it makes contact with the ground, without touching another player

An Indirect Free Kick is awarded for the opposing team:

- If the player touches the ball with their hands

If the ball enters the goal:

- If a dropped ball is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded
- If a dropped ball is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded



Law 9: The Ball In and Out of Play

Ball not in play

The ball is not in-play when:

- It has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air
- Play has been stopped by the referee

Ball in play

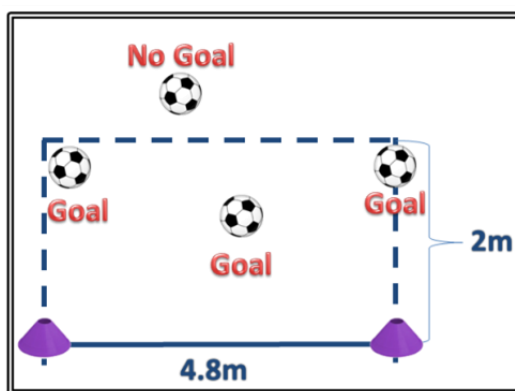
The ball is in play at other times, including when:

- It rebounds off the goalpost, crossbar, or corner flag post and remains in the field of play
- It rebounds off the referee

Law 10: Determining the Outcome of a Match

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed over the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the Laws of the Small Sided Game has been previously committed by the team scoring the goal.

When goalposts are not available and cones are used instead, a goal is scored when, if in the opinion of the referee, the whole of the ball crosses over the goal line between or above the cones, below two (2) meters, as shown on the picture below:



Law 11: Offside

There is no offside for 7v7 games.



Law 12: Fouls

The referee shall attempt to explain **ALL** infringements to the offending player

Fouls

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

- A. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- B. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- C. Jumps at an opponent
- D. Charges an opponent
- E. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- F. Pushes an opponent
- G. Tackles an opponent from behind to gain possession of the ball
- H. Makes contact with an opponent before touching the ball
- I. Holds an opponent
- J. Spits at an opponent
- K. Handles the ball deliberately

If any of offences above occurs inside the penalty area, a **penalty kick** is awarded.

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

- L. Plays in a dangerous manner
- M. Impedes the progress of a player
- N. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from its hands
- O. Commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12

A **penalty kick** is awarded if the above offence, except N, is committed by a player inside its own penalty area.

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, **inside his/her own penalty area**, commits any of the following three offences:

- P. Handles the ball for more than 6 seconds before releasing it from his/her possession
- Q. Handles the ball after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a team-mate
- R. Handles the ball after receiving it directly from a pass-in/dribble-in taken by a team-mate.

A re-take is awarded if the goalkeeper:

- S. Handles the ball again, from inside their penalty area, after releasing it from his/her possession



Law 13: The Free Kick

All free kicks are indirect, with exception of Penalty Kicks.

A goal can only be scored from an indirect free kick, if the ball is touched by another player before it enters the goal.

- If a free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, without being touched by a second player, a goal kick is awarded
- If a free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, without being touched by a second player, a corner kick is awarded

Procedure

For all free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. A goal cannot be scored directly from an indirect free kick. The ball is in play when the ball is touched and clearly moves.

Position of the Free Kick

Free kick inside the penalty area

Indirect free kick for the defending team

- All opponents must be at least five (5) (or six (6) yards) metres from the ball
- All opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play
- The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area
- A free kick awarded in the penalty area may be taken from any point inside that area

Indirect Free kick for the attacking team

- All opponents must be at least five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from the ball, unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts
- For offences A to O, except N, from Law 12:
 - Is a Penalty Kick and shall be taken from the penalty mark.
- For offenses P to R from Law 12:
 - Is an indirect free kick and shall be taken from the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Free kick outside the penalty area

- All opponents must be at least five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from the ball
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves
- The free kick is taken from the place the infringement occurred or from the position of the ball when the infringement occurred (According to the infringement outlined on Law 12)



Infringements and Sanctions

For any infringements included below, the free kick is retaken.

- Opponents encroaching within 5 metres (or six (6) yards) of the ball
- Kicker touches the ball a second time with their feet
- The ball is not kicked directly out of the penalty area

An Indirect Free Kick or Penalty Kick is awarded to the opposing team if the kicker:

- Touches the ball a second time with their hands

Law 14: The Penalty Kick

Penalty kicks are a part of the game. The reasons for awarding a penalty kick are outlined in Law 12. A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

Position of the Ball and Players

The ball:

- Must be placed on the penalty mark

Player taking the penalty kick:

- Must be properly identified

Defending goalkeeper:

- Must be on his/her goal line, facing the kicker, between the posts until the ball has been kicked.
- Goalkeeper is allowed to move sideways but can't move forward until the ball has been kicked.

The players other than the goalkeeper must be located:

- Inside the field of play
- Outside the penalty area
- Behind the penalty mark
- At least five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from the penalty mark

Procedure

- After the players have taken their positions in accordance with this Law, the referee signals for the penalty kick to be taken
- The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward
- The kicker must not play the ball again until it has touched another player
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves

The referee decides when a penalty kick has been completed.



Infringements and Sanctions

The below chart outlines the infringements of this Law.

Outcome of the Penalty Kick		
	Goal	No Goal
Encroachment by Attacking Player	Retake	IDFK for Defending Team
Encroachment by Defending Player	Goal	Retake
Offence by Goalkeeper	Goal	Retake
Ball is Kicked Backwards	IDFK for Defending Team	IDFK for Defending Team
Illegal Feinting	IDFK for Defending Team	IDFK for Defending Team
Wrong Kicker	IDFK for Defending Team	IDFK for Defending Team
Goalkeeper and kicker at the same time	IDFK for Defending Team	Retake
Ball is touched for 2 nd time with Hands	IDFK for Defending Team	IDFK for Defending Team
Ball is touched for 2 nd time with Feet	Retake	Retake

Law 15: The Pass-In or Dribble-In

A pass-in or dribble-in is a method of restarting play. The kicker may conduct either as a method of restarting play throughout the duration of the match.

A pass-in or dribble-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when the whole of the ball crosses the touch line, either on the ground or in the air.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a pass-in/dribble-in. A goal can be scored from a dribble-in only if the kicker touches the ball a second time with their feet or a pass-in if the ball touches another player before entering the net and considered as a goal.

Procedure

At the moment of delivering the ball, the kicker:

- Faces the field of play
- Has part of the ball on or behind the touch line

All opponents must stand no less than three (3) metres (or three (3) yards) from the point at which the pass-in or dribble-in is taken. The ball is in play when it enters the field of play.

Infringements and Sanctions

For any infringements, including those listed below, the pass-in/dribble-in is retaken.

- Opponents encroaching within 3 metres (or three (3) yards) of the ball

An Indirect Free Kick or is awarded to the opposing team if the kicker:

- Touches the ball a second time with their hands



Law 16: The Goal Kick

A goal kick is a method of restarting play.

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line either on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team, and a goal has not been scored in accordance with Law 10.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a goal kick.

Procedure

- The ball is kicked from any point within the penalty area by a player of the defending team
- The ball is in play once it leaves the penalty area.
- All opponents must be behind the retreat line and cannot cross the retreat line until the ball:
 - Is touched by a player of the team taking the goal kick **OR**,
 - Leaves the field of play **OR**,
 - Goes over the retreat line. (If the goalkeeper chooses to play the ball across the retreat line prior to the retreat of opposing players)

Infringements and Sanctions

For any infringements, including those listed below, the free kick is retaken.

- Opponents encroach the retreat line before it is touched by a player of the team taking the goal kick
- Kicker touches the ball a second time with their feet
- The ball is not kicked directly out of the penalty area

An Indirect Free Kick is awarded if:

- A player or goalkeeper who has taken a goal kick touches the ball a second time with his/her hand when the ball has left the penalty area before another player has touched it.

The indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the position where the second touch occurred (see Law 13 – Position of free kick).



Retreat Line

The retreat line will come into play when the ball has gone out for a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her arms. The retreat line shall be marked at the 1/3 yards of the field. The use of field markers outside the field of play to indicate the retreat line is recommended.

The ball is in play once it leaves the penalty area. All opponents must be behind the retreat line and cannot cross the retreat line until the ball:

- Is touched by a player of the team releasing the ball OR,
- Leaves the field of play OR,
- Goes over the retreat line. (If the goalkeeper chooses to play the ball across the retreat line prior to the opposition crossing the retreat line)

If the goalkeeper chooses not to wait for the opposing players to "retreat" and throws or passes the ball down the field, the ball is instantly in play and does not require a player from the goalkeeper's team to touch the ball first.



Retreat Line Sample 1



Law 17: The Corner Kick

A corner kick is a method of restarting play.

A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line either on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team, and a goal has not been scored in accordance with Law 10.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

Procedure

- The ball must be placed within the corner arc nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line
- The corner flag post must not be moved
- Opponents must remain five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from the corner arc until the ball has been kicked
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves

Infringements and Sanctions

For any infringements, including those listed below, the corner kick is retaken.

- Opponents encroaching within 5 metres (or six (6) yards) of the ball
- Kicker touches the ball a second time with their feet

An Indirect Free Kick or is awarded to the opposing team if the kicker:

- Touches the ball a second time with their hands

Restarts & Infringement Review

This chart outlines the outcome if a goal can be scored directly and what the restart of each type of kick becomes if in the event that a second touch occurs with either the hands or feet.

Type	Goal Scored Direct?	Infringe w/ Hands		Infringe w/ Feet	
		Attacker Infringe	Defender Infringe	Attacker Infringe	Defender Infringe
Kick-Off	Yes	IDFK	IDFK	Retake	Retake
Kick-In/Dribble-In	No	IDFK	IDFK	Retake	N/A
Corner Kick	Yes	IDFK	IDFK	Retake	Retake
IDFK	No	IDFK	IDFK	Retake	Retake
Drop Ball	No	IDFK	IDFK	Retake	Retake
Penalty Kick	Yes	IDFK	Retake	Retake	Retake
Goal Kick – GK	No	Retake	Retake	Retake	Retake
Goal Kick – Kicker	No	Retake	Retake	Retake	Retake




RULES AT A GLANCE

The following chart briefly outlines the fundamental Small Sided rules that mirror the Ontario Soccer Grassroots Outdoor Recreational Matrix Standards.

Item	Description
Playing Format	7v7 (including GK)
Substitutions	Unlimited (at any stoppage of play)
Game Duration	2 x 25 min. halves
Half Time Duration	5 minutes
Throw Ins	No (Pass-In/Dribble-In)
Retreat Line	Yes – 1/3 rd of Field
Offside	No
Ball Size	4 (or 5 Light)



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