



Law III – Number of Players

Players

A game is played by two teams, each consisting of no more than five players, one of whom is the goalkeeper.

Substitution Procedure

Substitutes may be used in any game played under the rules of an official competition at FIFA, confederation or national association level. The maximum number of substitutes permitted is seven. The number of substitutions made during a game is unlimited. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing court as a substitute for another player. A substitution is one which is made when the ball is in or out of play and for which the following conditions are observed:

- The player leaving the playing court must do so at his own substitution
- The player entering the playing court must also do so at his own substitution zone but not until the player leaving the playing court has passed completely over the touchline
- A substitute is subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referees whether called upon to play or not
- The substitution is completed when the substitute enters the playing court from which moment he becomes a player and the player whom he is replacing ceases to be a player

A goalkeeper may change places with any other player.

Infringements / Sanctions

If, while a substitution is being made, a substitute enters the playing court before the player being replaced has completely left:

- Play is stopped
- The player being replaced is instructed to leave the playing court
- The substitute is cautioned and shown the yellow card
- Play is restarted by an indirect free kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the ball was situated when the game was stopped. However, if the ball was inside the penalty area, the indirect free kick taken from the penalty area line, at the place nearest to the position of the ball when play was stopped.

If, while a substitution, is being made, a substitute enters the playing court or a player being replaced leaves it from a place other than the substitution zone:

- Play is stopped
- The offending player is cautioned and shown the yellow card
- Play is restarted by an indirect free kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the ball was situated when the game was stopped. However, if the ball was inside the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken from the penalty area line, at the place nearest to the position of the ball when play was stopped.



Decisions

Decision 1:

- At the start of the game, each team must have a minimum of five players

Decision 2:

- If in the event of players being sent off, fewer than three players (including the goalkeeper) are left in either of the teams, the game must be abandoned.