

FA LAW CHANGES 2025/26

Law 5. The Referee

Signal to be used by referees to count down the last five seconds of the eight-second restriction on goalkeepers. (*see Law 12*)

Law 8. The Start and Restart of Play – Dropped ball

If, when play was stopped, the ball was:

- Inside the penalty area – the ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area.
 - Outside the penalty area – the ball is dropped for a player of the team that has or would have gained possession if this is clear to the referee; otherwise, it is dropped for a player of the team that last touched it. The ball is dropped at its position when play was stopped.
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Law 9. The Ball in and out of Play

Indirect free kick and no disciplinary sanction when a team official, substitute or sent-off player or player who is temporarily off the field of play touches the ball as it is leaving the field of play and there is no intention to interfere unfairly.

Law 11. Offside

When the goalkeeper throws the ball, the last point of contact should be used for the purpose of determining an offside position.

Law 12. Fouls and Misconduct

A goalkeeper who controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds will be penalised, with a corner kick being awarded to the other team. (*see Law 17*)

The goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball when:

- *The ball is between their hands/arms or between hand(s) /arm(s) and any surface (ground or body);*
 - *Holding the ball in their outstretched hand;*
 - *Bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air.*
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Law 17. The Corner Kick

Kick to be taken from the corner area nearest to the goalkeeper's position when penalised.
