



2021 NFHS FIELD HOCKEY RULES CHANGES





RULE 1-3-1

SECTION 3 GAME EQUIPMENT

ART. 1 . . .

Solid, dark-colored goal boards, inside and out, 18-inches high, are required. **The goal boards may contain team/school logo or name provided the predominant color of the boards is still dark.** They shall be inside the goal net, attached to and flush with the goal posts so the width of the goal posts is not effectively increased.





RULE 1-4-5

SECTION 4 PLAYERS

Art. 5 . . .Field players who leave the field for injury treatment, refreshment, to change equipment or for some reason other than substitution are permitted to re-enter only through the substitution area.





RULE 1-5-4

SECTION 5 PLAYER UNIFORM

ART.4 . . . Individual players may wear mittens/gloves, knitted hats and soft headgear.

1. Head coverings worn for religious reasons are not considered hair devices; must be made of non-abrasive, soft materials; and must fit securely.
2. Head coverings worn for medical reasons require state association approval.





RULE 1-6-5

SECTION 6 PLAYER EQUIPMENT

ART. 5 . . . Goggles may be worn by all field players. A face mask may be worn by field players throughout the game. The face mask must be smooth, rounded, preferably transparent or single-colored and fit flush with the face. It shall not be attached to any hard, unyielding headgear (even if padded.)

NOTE: Field players are not permitted to conduct themselves in a manner which is dangerous to other players by taking advantage of the protective equipment they wear.





RULE 3-3-10 THRU 11 (NEW)

SECTION 3 TECHNIQUES

Art. 10 . . . Aerial ball is an intentional pass in the air above players, using a flick or scoop.

Art. 11 . . . Sweep is a legal stroke which involves a swinging movement of the stick, maintained horizontal and close to the ground, towards the ball. If it is done on the left side of the body (backhand sweep), the ball must be contacted with the edge of the stick. If it is done on the right side of the body (forehand sweep), the ball must be contacted with the flat side of the stick.





RULE 3-4-4 (NEW)

SECTION 4 OTHER

Art. 4 . . . Dangerous ball is a ball that causes legitimate evasive action by a player.





RULE 8-1-1C

SECTION 1 FOULS AND PENALTIES

ART. 1 . . . Fouls include the following:

c. Hitting the ball hard on the forehand with the edge of the stick. This does not prohibit use of the edge of the stick on the forehand in a controlled action in a tackle, or when raising the ball in a controlled way over an opponent's stick or over a goalkeeper who is lying on the ground. ~~or when using a long pushing motion along the ground.~~





RULE 8-1-1

SECTION 1 FOULS AND PENALTIES

ART. 1 . . . Fouls include the following:

~~p. Hand stop of any ball (except goalkeeper);~~

~~q. p.~~ Obstruction, which occurs when:

1. A player moves or interposes herself or her stick, keeping an opponent from attempting to play the ball;
2. A player shields the ball with her stick or any part of her body;
3. A third player takes a position between an opponent and the ball so her teammate has an opportunity to play the ball.

NOTE: The following principles apply to obstruction: 1) A stationary, receiving player may be facing any direction. 2) Once a player receives the ball, she may move away in any direction (without body contact with the tackler) or pass/deflect the ball. 3) The responsibility is with the tackler to move around the receiver to attempt a legitimate tackle;

~~r. q.~~ Goalkeeper striking and /or kicking in an intimidating or dangerous manner, or playing the ball without the stick in her hand, ~~or placing the ball after catching an aerial ball;~~





2021 NFHS FIELD HOCKEY EDITORIAL CHANGES





RULE 1-7-6

SECTION 7 THE GOALKEEPER

ART. 1 . . . When the ball is inside the circle the goalkeeper is defending, with stick in hand, the goalkeeper:

- a. May use the stick, feet, kickers, legs or leg guards, arms, hands and any other part of the body to propel, stop, push or deflect the ball in any direction;
- b. May play an aerial ball with the body, protective equipment, hand or stick at any height;
- c. Shall release the ball immediately if caught;
- d. Shall not play in a manner that is dangerous, intimidating or leads to dangerous play to other players.

~~**ART. 6 . . .** The goalkeeper shall not play in a manner which endangers other players.~~





RULE 2-1-4

SECTION 1 OFFICIALS

ART. 4 . . . Prior to the game, the officials shall:

a. Approximately 15 minutes prior to the start of the game, examine the field, paying particular attention to the following:

1. Goal cages and boards, nets and posts;
2. Striking circle, field marking and the location of the penalty stroke mark;
3. Proper placement of team benches, chairs for suspended players, ~~officials' table~~ scorer's table and spectator area;
4. Field conditions.

NOTE: Any uncorrectable conditions shall be reported to both coaches prior to the start of the game.





RULE 3-2-9

SECTION 2 PROCEDURES

ART. 9 . . . 16-yard hit is a means for a player of the defending team to put the ball in play after it has ~~gone~~ been played out of bounds over the end line by a player from the attacking team, but and no goal is scored. The ball is placed in line with the place where it crossed the end line, and up to 16 yards from the inner edge of the end line. Legal strokes include a hit, flick, scoop, push or self-pass.





RULE 8-1 PENALTIES

SECTION 1 FOULS AND PENALTIES

PENALTIES:

1. For fouls outside the circle, a free hit shall be awarded the opponents.
2. For deliberate fouls by the **defense defending team** inside the 25-yard line, but outside the circle, the official shall award a penalty corner.
3. For fouls inside the circle by the **attackers attacking team**, a free hit shall be awarded the **defense defending team**; if by the **defense defending team**, a penalty corner shall be awarded the **attackers attacking team**. Under some circumstances a penalty stroke may be awarded. (11-1-1)
4. If the offending team commits a foul before the awarded penalty, the penalty may be dealt with as misconduct.
5. For deliberate fouls between the 25-yard lines, an appropriate card shall be issued to the offender.





RULE 11-2-9

SECTION 2 HOW TAKEN

ART. 9 . . . The penalty stroke is retaken when:

- a. There is an offense by the goalkeeper defending the stroke, including moving either foot before the ball has been played and no goal is scored. The goalkeeper must be verbally warned, and for any subsequent offense, the card progression shall be followed. If a goal is scored even though there has been an offense by the goalkeeper, the goal is awarded.
- b. A defender penetrates the 25-yard line prior to the stroke being taken and influences the play.
- c. The stroke is taken before the whistle and a goal is scored.





2021 NFHS FIELD HOCKEY POINTS OF EMPHASIS





AERIAL BALLS AND HIGH BALLS

With increased play on artificial surfaces and better skill levels, aerial balls, which are balls lifted intentionally with a flick or scoop, are becoming more prevalent. A high ball is one which is unintentionally lifted by a hit, is deflected into the air, or pops up above knee height between two players. Officials must consider height, speed and proximity to other players in order to determine danger. The NFHS Rules Committee developed a three page infographic for officials' education. The infographic can be found on the NFHS web page for field hockey.

<https://www.nfhs.org/activities-sports/field-hockey/>. <https://www.nfhs.org/media/4294955/field-hockey-graphic-final-1.pdf>





PROVIDING AN OFFICIAL SCORER AND TIMER

Scorer's and timers are an integral part of the official's team. As a part of the officiating crew they should give appearance to impartiality and neutrality throughout the contest. Verbal or visible reactions to outstanding plays or official's calls is inappropriate. Rule 2-2 outlines the duties of the scorers and timers for field hockey.

The home team shall supply the official timer and scorer. They are to remain at the scorer's table for the entire game, including intermissions between quarters. The home team should supply an audible device as well as a game clock and stopwatch. NFHS rules recommend they wear officials pinnies at the table.





TACKLING

Smooth passing and dribbling techniques are two core skills all players should know how to do. Players should also know how to tackle the opponent when the ball is in their possession. The NFHS rules book defines tackling as a technique executed by a player in an attempt to gain possession or cause the opponent to lose possession of the ball. To properly execute a tackle, the player must be in the proper position to avoid a foul. The player shall not use the stick dangerously, nor deliberately make body or stick contact to gain any advantage when tackling. Remember that a player can't hit, hook or hold an opponent's stick with their stick. There should be clear intent to play the ball by the tackling player and the timing of the movement must be exact.





FIVE-YARD VIOLATION

The opponent (and attack players inside the attacking 25) shall be 5-yards from the self-start/free hit.

If an opponent is within 5-yards of the ball, she may shadow the opponent but must not interfere with the taking of the free hit/self-start and must not play nor attempt to play the ball. The NFHS rules book defines shadowing as the act of being within playing distance of an opponent and following their movement on the field without impeding their progress. If this player is not playing the ball, attempting to play the ball or influencing play, she has not violated the 5-yard rule. If the player does impede progress or influence play she shall receive a warning and another free hit may be awarded. For repetitive violations by a player, the official should use the proper card progression. Be aware the player taking the self-pass does not have to delay her start.





ISSUING CARDS FOR FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Officials must always consider violations for repetitive, non-dangerous fouls, deliberate actions, misconduct or dangerous play. When possible, the official should use preventive officiating.

Card progression is an important tool in game management as well as ensuring player safety and fairness during the game. At times a verbal caution can serve as a warning to both teams from an official. However, when one player or one team commits repetitive fouls and is in the card progression it is not appropriate game management to include both teams in this same card progression. Both teams have their own card progression and should not be included in the opponents' card progression.



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