

RULE OF HOCKEY SIMPLIFIED!

As an umpire, it is important to have reasonable knowledge of the Rules of Hockey. It is all about interpretation and it may be that your understanding of the rules may be different to that of the players and even your co-umpire. So, it is important that you understand the rules to apply them correctly and make sure that you briefly discuss various situations with your co-umpire in your pre-match chat to ensure you are both on the same page.

Not everyone will always have the time, to read through the full Rule Book however it is a requirement that you do. You would not drive a car without knowing the rules of the road. For now, to make it a bit easier the rules have been broken down into the following headings:

- Team Composition & Player Equipment
- Basic Outdoor Rules
- Types of Fouls in Hockey
- Types of Punishments for Fouls

You can find a copy of the most recent FIH Rule Book at: <http://www.fih.ch/inside-fih/our-official-documents/rules-of-hockey/>

1) Player Equipment & Team Composition

<p>Player Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Field Player</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Hockey Stick • Correct Team Attire • Shin Pads • Gum Shield • Hockey Shoes 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Goalkeeper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Hockey Stick (must have stick in hand to play the ball with feet) • Pads (Legs & Feet) • Body & Leg Protector • Gloves • Full Helmet (compulsory during the whole game) • Different Colour Shirt
<p>Team Composition</p>	<p><u>Each Team on the Bench may consist of the following:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 GK – max 16 players OR • 2 GK's – max 18 players • 1 Coach, 1 Manager, 1 Physio • Ass. Coach can only join bench during breaks (otherwise must remain outside of bench area) 	<p><u>During a match, each team must have max 11 players on the pitch:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 GK & 10 field players OR • 11 field players (NO KICKING BACK) • Clearly marked Captains

2) Basic Outdoor Rules

The basic outdoor rules can be summarised as:

- A player can only play with the flat part of the stick.
- A player cannot play the ball with their foot unless you are the Goalkeeper (in the circle only!). If it accidentally touches a players foot but does not influence play, play may continue.
- A goal can only be scored from inside the circle arising either from a field goal, penalty corner or penalty stroke (i.e. the ball must touch an attackers stick somewhere in the circle before it goes into the goal).
- Players cannot trip, push, interfere or handle an opponent physically (semi-contact allowed only when contesting for the ball but must be fair).
- Any foul on the pitch except the circle is a Free Hit to the non-offending team.
- Any foul in the circle by the defending team is a penalty corner.
- Defenders must be 5m away from Free Hit (in 23m area, everyone must be 5m away).
- Free Hit for attackers in 23m area, ball must move 5m before it can enter the circle.

3) Types of Fouls in Hockey

Obstruction	When ball carrier intentionally shields the ball with either stick or body to prevent a defender from tackling them legally.
Third-Party Obstruction	When a team mate intentionally or unintentionally positions themselves between the ball and their team mate to prevent the defender from getting to the ball.
Physical Play	Where a player either intentionally or unintentionally pushes, shoulders or use any part of their body to get to the ball or to prevent another player to get to the ball.
Dangerous Play	Where a player generally intentionally plays another player in an unsafe manner to get to the ball (sliding tackle that takes out a player / using their stick to hit another player / hitting another player). Or if a ball is lifted intentionally or unintentionally into a crowded area.
Playing with back of the stick	Player cannot play the ball with the round part of the stick when either trying to make a tackle, to stop or pass the ball.
Hockey Stick Interference	Player hits a ball carrier's stick either intentionally / unintentionally when trying to make a tackle or to get to the ball.
Undercutting the ball	Also known as blading – intentionally undercutting the ball the make it lift during a hit (look at the position of the stick when it hits the ball – face is turned open).

4) Types of Punishments for Fouls

<p>Free Hit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given to the non-offending team and taken in close vicinity of where the foul occurred. Note: the player taking the free hit must make an attempt to stop the ball before doing a self-pass or pass to another player.
<p>Penalty Corner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unintentional Foul by defender in the circle – foot, tackle, accidental physical play, playing ball out the back line intentionally etc. Intentional Foul by defender in 23m area – playing ball when not 5m, physical tackle / breakdown stick tackle, playing the back out the back line intentionally etc.
<p>Penalty Stroke</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any Intentional foul committed by defender inside the circle or to prevent a goal from being scored. Includes Ball hitting any part of the body of a defender on the goal line and prevented a goal from being scored.
<p>Personal Penalties (cards)</p>	<p>Three different penalty cards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Green</u>: 2min off – first warning for minor fouls or repeated fouls <u>Yellow</u>: 5min or 10min off – recurring fouls / severe fouls or dangerous play <u>Red</u>: Off rest of the game – Severe foul (hitting a player, umpire abuse, 2nd yellow card offense) need to leave the field and not allowed to stay.

Umpiring takes practice!!

The more you umpire, the more confident you will become. There is no such thing as the perfect umpire and it is impossible to get everything 100% correct. Remember that there will always be players, coaches and spectators that umpire from the side-line but never actually take up a whistle. It is important to not take their comments to heart and to get guidance from the right people!

The Key is to keep practising and ask for advice from more experienced umpires where possible. If you would like coaching, contact your Club and they will arrange sessions with the Regional Development Officer when possible.