

MRF Rules: Key Variations from AFA Rules

When comparing MRF rules to those of the AFA, several differences are evident. In some instances, the AFA refers to competition-specific rules, whereas MRF has established its own clear guidelines.

Law 3 – Number of Players

- **AFA Rule:** A match must start with a minimum of 3 players, including a goalkeeper.
 - **MRF Rule:** A match must start with a minimum of 4 players, including a goalkeeper.
-

Law 4 – Player Equipment

- **AFA Rule:** Only goalkeepers may wear goalie gloves, long pants, and mouthguards (optional).
 - **MRF Rule:** Any player may wear pants, provided they are not baggy and do not have pockets.
-

Law 7 – Match Duration and Time-outs

- **MRF Match Duration:**
 - **Junior Primary & Intermediate Primary:** Two equal halves of 15 minutes each.
 - **All others:** two equal halves of 20 minutes each.
 - **Half-Time Duration:** 2 minutes.
- **Time-Outs:**

- **AFA Rule:** One 1-minute time-out per game (subject to competition rules).
 - **MRF Rule:** No time-outs permitted.
 - **Abandoned Match Policy:**
 - **First Half Abandonment:** Match is declared a draw.
 - **Second Half Abandonment:** Score at the time of abandonment stands as the final result.
-

Law 8 – Kick-off & Dropped Ball

- **Kick-off Distance:**
 - **AFA Rule:** Opponents must be at least 3 meters from the ball.
 - **MRF Rule:** Opponents must be at least 5 meters from the ball.
 - **Dropped Ball:**
 - **AFA Rule:** Included.
 - **MRF Rule:** Dropped balls are not used.
-

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

- **AFA Rule:**
 - a. 1 x 10-minute extra time period (Golden Goal)
 - b. If still tied, a penalty shootout (best of 5)
- **MRF Rule:**
 - a. 1 x 5-minute extra time period (Golden Goal)
 - b. If still tied, a penalty shootout (best of 5)

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Slide Tackling:

- **AFA Rule:**
Slide tackling is strictly prohibited. However, **sliding** (e.g., to block a shot, intercept a pass, or retain possession) is permitted **if no opponent is within immediate playing distance** and the action is performed safely.
- **MRF Rule:**
Slide tackling is strictly prohibited (Any player slide tackling will be given at minimum a yellow card)
Sliding is **not allowed** for outfield players under any circumstances.
Goalkeepers **may slide** within the yellow semi-circle to play the ball, provided it is done safely and **not feet first** in a dangerous manner.
- **Cards and Discipline:**
 - **AFA Rule:** Yellow/red cards may be shown to players, coaches, and substitutes.
 - **MRF Rule:** Cards may be issued to players, coaches, substitutes, **and spectators**.

Goalkeeper Distribution:

- **AFA Rule:** No specific mention of goalkeeper distribution limits.
- **MRF Rule:** A goalkeeper **must not throw or kick the ball over the two-thirds line** directly into the opposition's end. Doing so results in a turnover or indirect free kick (as per MRF competition guidelines).

Law 13 – Accumulated Fouls

- **AFA Rule:** Accumulated fouls are tracked for direct and penalty kick offenses.
- **MRF Rule:** No accumulation of fouls.

Law 15 – Kick-Ins

- **AFA Rule:** Defending players must be at least 5 meters from the touchline.
- **MRF Rule:** Defending players must be at least 3 meters from the touchline.

Law 17 – Corner Kicks

- **AFA Rule:** Opponents must be at least 5 meters from the corner arc.
- **MRF Rule:** Opponents must be at least 3 meters from the corner arc.