

VSRA

Standard Instructions for Assistant Referees

These instructions for assistant referees apply to all games played under the jurisdiction of the VSRA unless specifically over-ridden by the referee prior to kickoff. The instructions supplement but do not replace the FIFA laws of the Game.

1 BEFORE THE GAME

Note the details of the game from the Arbiter:

- Print out or write down and take with you:
 - Date
 - Time
 - Field
 - Division
 - Teams
 - Other officials

Bring with you to the game:

- Uniform (Shirt (tucked in), shorts, socks (black, pulled up), shoes (black) and badge)
- Flags (if you have a pair) – they are the responsibility of the referee but it is better to have two sets than none.
- Whistle, cards, notebook, pen, coin, and watch. The referee may not show up or may get injured so you have to be prepared to step into the middle.

Arrive:

20 minutes before kickoff.

Pre-game checks:

Assist the referee with the following checks prior to kickoff. You can start these checks before the referee arrives.

- Field
 - Net up properly. Particularly check that it is secured to the ground in the area immediately behind the goal posts. Also check that it will not interfere with the goalkeeper.
 - Corner flags – [in place](#) 5' tall and securely and safely [in place](#).
 - Goal area – check for glass and other potentially dangerous items.
 - Garbage and debris.
 - Lines – familiarize your self with the lines that are and are not on the field. If there are extra lines make sure you know which ones will be used.
 - Ensure that substitutes, equipment and spectators are well clear of the touchline from end to end.
- Teams and players
 - Get game report; filled in.

- Check players for:
 - Correct jersey number on team list.
 - Safe cleats – no sharp edges.
 - Jewelry – no earrings, necklaces, [watches](#) or bracelets. No taping allowed.
 - Shin guards
 - Proper uniform – socks pulled up over shin guards, shirt tucked in.
 - Casts and braces – must be covered to protect other players from intentional or accidental injury.
 - Goalkeeper with distinctly coloured jersey.

Meet with referee

Meet with the referee to clarify whether or not these instructions are to be followed or if other instructions will apply. This must be determined before the game, not during. Agree on the duration of the halves. Go over any silent signals that will be used for communication between the officials.

2 DURING THE GAME

At the kickoff

Line up level with the second to last defender (the goalkeeper is usually, but not always, the last defender) with your flag at your side, in the hand closest to the center line. Look towards the referee to acknowledge that you are ready. Start your watch so you can backup the referee's timekeeping.

During free play

Position: You need to be at the offside point at all times. This means that you have to constantly be alert to the play and to the players. The offside point will be one of the following three positions, depending on which is closest to the defending team's goal line:

- The center line
- The second last defender
- The ball

Try to stand and move square to the field as much as possible. Do not ball watch other than to keep track of the play. Side step as much as possible to adjust you position but sprint when necessary.

Always hold your flag straight down at your side and in the hand closest to the referee so it is easy for her to see.

Watch for:

- Ball out of play.
- Offside
- Fouls that the referee cannot see
- Fouls and misconduct behind the play
- Location of fouls around the penalty area.
- Goalkeeper playing the ball with his hands outside of the penalty area.

Ball out of play

It is your responsibility to indicate possession when then ball crosses your half of the touchline and your half of the goal line. When the whole of the ball has crossed over the whole of the line, indication the direction of the throw or whether it is a goal kick or corner ~~kick as appropriate~~ [kick, as appropriate](#), and look at the referee.

Do not raise your flag in anticipation of the ball crossing the line, wait for it to cross. However, you can put your flag in the correct hand in anticipation so you can make a

prompt signal. If it could go either way, hold your flag with both hands in front of you so you can quickly bring it up with either hand. If the referee disagrees with your call, change your signal to match his.

When the ball crosses your touch line in the opposite half, or your goal line on the far side of the goal, raise your flag to indicate the ball is out of play and then look at the referee and echo the referee's signal. If the referee looks to you to make a decision, give the signal that you think is correct.

Penalty kick

When a penalty kick is awarded at your end of the field, immediately sprint to your position at the point where the penalty area line meets the goal line. From this point you will judge goalkeeper encroachment and whether or not a goal is scored.

Stand facing the goal with your flag down at your side in your right hand (away from the field). The goalkeeper is deemed to have encroached if no part of him is on or over the goal line when the ball is kicked. If the goal keeper encroaches before the ball is kicked quickly, but quietly, shift your flag to your left hand. This indicates to the Referee that the goalkeeper has encroached and the Referee can decide if the Penalty should be retaken or not.

If a goal is scored, sprint along the goal line to the corner flag and then sprint up the touchline part way towards center. If a goal is not scored and the ball goes out of play, take up the appropriate position for the restart. If a goal is not scored and the ball remains in play, immediately run backwards to the corner flag and then up the touchline to the offside position. Keep your eye on the play while you are returning to your position.

Goal kick

Your first duty on a goal kick is to ensure that the ball is correctly placed in the goal area. To do this, stand even with the top of the goal area. When you are satisfied with the placement of the ball, move quickly to a point level with the top of the penalty area. When the kick is taken, watch that the ball passes out of the penalty area before being touched by another player. This is particularly important in the younger age groups and on poorly marked fields. Once the ball has passed out of the penalty area, take up your position at the offside point. If the ball is played before it leaves the penalty area, raise your flag straight up.

Once the ball is correctly placed in the Goal Area you can move directly to the offside position if there are no players in a position to play the ball before it leaves the Penalty Area.

Corner kick

Take up a position behind the corner flag so you can look along the goal line. If the kick is being taken from the corner nearest you, you may have to stand back a few steps to keep out of the kicker's way. Prior to the ball being kicked make a mental note of the position of the second to last defender.

Once the ball is kicked, look to see if it curves out across the goal line and then comes back in. Once you are certain the ball has stayed in play, take up your position at the offside point and watch carefully for the second last defender.

Free kick

Take up a position at the offside point. For kicks near the goal, that position will likely be level with the defensive wall. Be prepared to move quickly with the ball since it becomes the offside point once it has passed the wall. When the kick is near the goal, watch the referee because he may signal for you to cover the goal line rather than the offside. In this position you are to judge whether or not a goal is scored. As soon as it is clear that you are no longer needed in that position, return to the offside point.

Foul near penalty area

When the referee calls a foul against the defending team near the Penalty Area boundary he may want your opinion as to whether or not the foul took place inside the penalty area. Remember that the penalty area line is part of the penalty area. If the foul takes place inside the penalty area, run towards the corner flag and stop there. If the foul takes place outside the penalty area, remain at your position on the touchline. In either case, be sure to look towards the referee. Once the referee has indicated Penalty Kick or Free Kick, take up your normal position.

Substitutions

When a team calls for a substitution, use both hands to hold your flag high above your head with the shaft parallel to the ground. ~~Continue to hold the flag in the correct position until you are satisfied that the substitution has been properly completed (i.e. the correct number of players came off the field).~~ If the Assistant Referee on the far side of the field is signaling for a substitution and the Referee does not notice, echo the substitution signal. Once the Referee notices your signal, give a discrete nod to the far side of the field.

Goal

~~If the ball goes in the goal and you think it is a valid goal, turn and sprint part way towards centre with your flag at your side. If the ball goes in the goal and you do not think it is a valid goal, remain stationary and give the appropriate signal (ball out of play, foul or offside). In either case, be sure to look towards the referee. The substitution signal is held until the Referee acknowledges it and takes control of the substitution or play is resumed.~~

Goal

- If a goal is scored and the referee stops play, sprint towards the halfway line and look towards the Referee until he acknowledges the goal.
- If a goal is scored and play continues, stand at the goal line with your flag raised to indicate that the ball was out of play. Once the Referee acknowledges your signal, sprint towards the centre line to indicate that a goal was scored.
- If the referee stops play and indicates a goal that you think should not be allowed, stand still at your position with your flag at your side and look at the referee. Once he acknowledges you, discretely beckon him over and explain why you do not think it was a goal (ball did not wholly cross the line, attacking team committed a foul prior to scoring, ball was out of play prior to entering the goal).

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3 AFTER THE GAME

When the final whistle blows

- Go towards the center circle to meet the referee and the other assistant.
- The official closest to the ball should collect it and take it to the center circle.
- Watch the teams shake hands to make sure there are no incidents.
- Ensure your name is on the game report.

4 SIGNALS

Signals are used to communicate with the [referee,Referee](#), players and spectators. Signals must be accurate, crisp and held long enough to signal your decision. The flag should be a straight extension of your arm and not pointing behind you. It is easier to achieve this if you hold the flag with your pointer finger along the shaft of the flag rather than wrapped around it. When you are not signaling, your flag should be at your side or in front of you and in the hand ~~furthest from the referee~~[closest to the Referee](#). Please note that your flag is not a toy you use to amuse yourself while the ball is in the other half of the field.

1. Ball out of play, throw in: stand facing the field, arm straight at 45° above horizontal, pointing in direction of throw.
2. Ball out of play, goal kick: stand facing the field, flag held horizontally in your right hand and pointing towards the goal area. [You should be within a yard or two of the goal line, if not on it, when you make this signal.](#)
3. Ball out of play, corner kick: stand facing the field, flag held in your right hand and pointing to the base of the corner flag. [You should be within a yard or two of the corner flag when making this signal.](#)
4. Offside: flag in your right hand and pointing straight up. When the referee blows his whistle, indicate where on the field the infraction took place (near side, middle or far side).
5. Foul [that the referee could not otherwise see](#): wiggle your flag high overhead. [Hold the flag in the hand that you are going to signal direction with. This tells the referee which team committed the foul and allows him to decide whether or not to play advantage.](#) When the referee blows his whistle, indicate the direction of the kick with your arm straight at 45° above horizontal.
6. Substitution: Hold your flag horizontally with both hands high overhead.
7. Goal: Sprint part way towards centre with your flag at your side.