



Indoor Field Hockey Rules

Indoor hockey differs from conventional 100 yard long outdoor hockey in that it requires tighter play in a smaller area. Adaptations of the outdoor rules were made to compensate for this tighter play. These rule adaptations require players to refine their passing and ball control skills. In indoor hockey, boards are used along the sidelines. The ball can be played off these boards and remain in play. The indoor hockey rules are the same as the outdoor rules with these exceptions:

1. **Teams**: Teams consist of not more than 6 players on the field. (This may be 5 field players and a goalkeeper or 6 field players with a “designated goalie” who must wear a helmet.) A team must have at least a minimum of 4 field players one of which must be a “designated goalie”. A team may have no more than one male on the field of play at a time. A team may have a male player as goalie as well as one male player on the field of play.
2. **Time**: The halves are 25 minutes in length.
3. **Free Push**: All opposing team members must be 3 meters away from the player taking the free push. If the free push is within 3 meters of the opponent’s circle, players from both teams must be 3 meters away.
4. **Penalty Corner**: All defense must be behind the goal line and on the opposite side of the goal cage from where the corner is taken. Only the goalkeeper may be in the goal cage.
5. **Off Side**: There is no off side in indoor hockey.
6. **Fouls**: A player may not -
 - A. Hit the ball
 - B. Lift the ball except for a shot on goal
 - C. Hit at or play the ball in the air
 - D. “Jab” tackle or play the ball intentionally into an opponent
 - E. Play an aerial ball outside the circle with a hand or dead stick. (Player must wait for the ball to settle)
7. **Center Pass / Push Off**: Opposing players must be 3 meters away. Ball may move in any direction.
8. **Ball into Play**: The first contact must move the ball 10cm/4 inches.
9. **Bobbles/Raised Balls**: An accidental raised ball anywhere on the pitch should not be blown as a foul unless there is an opponent within playing the ball. Any ball raised higher than 10cm/4 inches. Must be penalized. Bobbles by the attack in the offensive circle must be called immediately.

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10. **Penalty Corner Stop:** The ball should be nearly motionless – a movement of no more than 5cm before it has to be stopped again – for shot on goal. The ball can be stopped either inside or outside the circle. The stop does not have to be immediate. Allow for lateral, forward, and backward movement. Be sure the ball is clearly stopped before the shot. Cushioned receipt by the receiver moving the stick backward with the ball and then shooting is illegal. A legal stick stop and immediate “drag in” of the ball is allowed.
11. **Shot at Goal:** A raised shot on goal must be targeted at or going between the posts. A lifted shot going wide of the posts is a foul. A raised shot on goal must also have the impetus to get to the goal.
12. **Lying on the Ground:** Lying on the ground is defined as having one hand or knee on the ground. Using the free hand or knee to aid in balance while in a tackling position, or to stop a free ball is illegal. Accidental/incidental contact with the hand, arm, or knee should not be blown as a foul. A hand on the stick and resting on the ground (i.e. knuckles) is not interpreted as hand on the ground. Rather, the hand is considered part of the stick.
13. **Hand on Stick:** Playing the ball with the hand holding the stick is legal. Playing the ball with the hand only is not permitted.
14. **Illegal Stroke:** A long pushing, sweeping, or sling strap stroke along the pitch with the stick before making contact with the ball is not a legal push stroke. The stick must be placed at, or close to (no more than twice the diameter of the ball) a stationary or moving ball. Putting the ball into play by the use of a drag stroke to disguise the direction of the ball is absolutely forbidden. A Hit shot is not legal.
15. **Dead Stick Stop:** A raised ball on goal may be stopped with a “dead stick” (raised and stationary) by a defender. The opposite does not apply to the attacker deflecting a raised shot into goal.
16. **Goalkeeper Rebound:** Any rebound in the air off the body or pads of the goalkeeper is not a foul and players must wait until the ball reaches the ground before attempting to play it. The goalkeeper should not be penalized if the ball is propelled into the air during the act of saving an aerial shot at goal. The goalkeeper is not allowed to kick the ball into the air and must allow the ball to settle before kicking a rebounding ball.
17. **Goalkeeper Outside the Circle:** The goalkeeper is permitted to play the ball while lying on the ground if both the goalkeeper and the ball are within the circle. The goalkeeper may play the ball just outside the circle as a field player. A goalkeeper may not participate in general play more than a meter or two outside the circle because of the danger which could be caused by the extra protective equipment. *This interpretation is solely for reasons of safety. There is nothing to prevent a goalkeeper from taking a free push well outside the circle as long as the goalkeeper retreats quickly from the play. The penalty is a penalty corner. This interpretation also applies to the kicking back who must remove helmet and gloves to play outside the circle.

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18. **Substitution Procedure:** Rolling substitution. Players must enter and exit from their team bench side. A substituting player may not enter the court until a teammate leaves the field. Illegal substitutions will be penalized by either umpire with a penalty corner.
19. **Dangerous Use of Stick:** Umpires should penalize this action in the interest of safety, especially when a player lifts the stick over the head of any other player.
20. **Turn and Fire:** Wheeling on the spot and firing the ball blindly with either a forehand or backhand action is not permitted.
21. **Intentional Offenses / Rough Play:** These actions are not within the spirit of the game and should be penalized promptly. Penalty corners / penalty strokes and green / yellow / red cards should be applied as appropriate.
22. **Dissent / Bad Language:** Umpires may upgrade or reverse a penalty based on a player's comments. Such action is more effective, if used appropriately, than giving a green card. Any audible swearing or profanity should be severely punished.
23. **Advantage:** The advantage rule in indoor hockey is very important to the flow of the game. Umpires are requested to whistle as little as possible and to ignore minor fouls.
24. **Obstruction:** There is no obstruction if the receiving player moves in any direction with the ball. It is the responsibility of the tackling player to get into a legitimate defensive position to tackle for the ball. A legitimate tackle can be made only if the tackler is within playing distance of the ball. Umpires are reminded to look for the following illegal actions:
 - Receiving player standing still with the ball as opponent attempts to get it.
 - Tackling player barging into the receiver from the back.
 - Receiving player backing into the tackler.
 - Shielding the ball with the body along the boards or shielding with the hip / stick. or kicking the stick out of the way intentionally.
 - Holding the ball against the sideboards.
25. **Penalty Corner at the End of Half / Match:** When a penalty corner has been awarded and time expires before completion, the umpires shall administer the corner. N.B. for this situation only, the ball must be stopped inside the circle. The PC is over when the ball leaves the circle or the attack fouls. If the defense fouls, the PC is repeated.