

**AYSO – Region 13**  
**Penalties (Penalty Shoot-out)**  
**Procedure**

**[Revised Nov 26, 2023]**

The Penalty Shoot-out (officially “Kicks from the Penalty Mark” before July 2023) is a procedure used to determine which team advances in a tournament or playoffs after a game ends in a tie. (Two periods of extra time may or may not be played prior to the Penalty Shoot-out, as directed for the particular game.) In general terms, each team takes five kicks, and the team that makes the most moves on.

Coaches, referees, and parents are reminded that Penalties can be a stressful time for players, especially younger ones. As with all times of the game, coaches are reminded to be Positive, Instructional, and Encouraging, and parents are asked to cheer and be supportive of the players (from both teams). (If necessary, referees retain the same authority during Penalties as they do during the game to manage the game and issue discipline.)

**Getting Ready for Penalties:**

- Only players on the field at the end of play are eligible to participate. Players should not leave the field at the end of the last period of play, and substitutes should not enter the field of play.
  - *Note: A player who has left the field of play to be treated for an injury and has **not** been substituted for remains eligible to participate in Penalties if the player has recovered and is able to do so. (If such a player remains too injured to participate, no substitute is allowed — see “reduce to equate” below.)*
  - *Note for Assistant Referees: Be sure that you have accurate records of who is in the game when it ends. Be sure to note any injury substitutions that occur in the last period of play.*
- The referee chooses the goal to be used (unless a separate off-the-field goal has been designated to be used so the next game can start) giving first consideration to the goalkeepers (i.e. position of the sun; condition of the goal area).
- The referee conducts a coin toss — the team that wins the coin toss chooses whether to kick 1st or 2nd.
- Prior to the first kick being taken, each team must have the same number of players participating in Penalties. If one team does not have a full complement of players, the other team **must** “reduce to equate.” This means that the coach or captain will tell the referee which eligible player(s) will not participate in the Penalties.
  - *Note: No further reductions take place after the first kick occurs.*

- *Note: Any player who will not participate will join the coach and other substitutes on the touch line (for 10U, outside the center circle).*
- *Note: Teams are **not** required to provide a list to the referee of the kickers or the order. But coaches are strongly encouraged to decide the order in advance so that the kicks continue efficiently without delays between kicks.*
- All players (except the goalkeepers) wait in their half of the center circle. Substitutes and coaches remain on the touchline within the technical area (i.e. within 10 yards of the halfway line). The initial goalkeeper for each team moves to the goal where the kicks will be taken.
  - *Note: In younger games, **at the sole discretion of the referee**, the referee may choose to permit the coach and substitutes to join their teammates in or near the center circle but must ensure they know which players are eligible to take kicks.*
  - *Note: Parents and other spectators must remain on the touchlines. Under **no circumstances** may parents or other spectators be on the field or behind the goal line where the kicks are taking place. (If an off-the-field goal is provided, spectators must be located an appropriate distance away.)*
  - *Note: Players must keep their uniforms and equipment on (including shin guards) during Penalties.*
- One assistant referee remains in or next to the center circle with the players and is responsible for watching the players in the center, tracking the order of eligible players, and maintaining a backup count of goals.
- The other assistant referee (typically the referee designated as the senior assistant referee during the pregame) takes up a position on the goal line at the intersection of the goal area and is responsible for monitoring whether the whole ball crosses the whole line and monitoring goalkeeper violations.
- The referee takes a position even with the ball, on the side of the goal opposite from the assistant referee, so that he can observe the kicker and the goal and see the assistant referee. The referee keeps the official record of which players have taken kicks and which kicks have been successful.

### **Taking the Kicks**

Penalties are conducted in pairs, one kick from each team, for an initial round of up to five pairs of kicks. In each pair, the same team kicks first.

- The referee will confirm the goalkeeper is on the goal line before blowing the whistle to permit the kick.
- During each kick, the players not involved in that particular kick must remain in the center circle, except for the other goalkeeper, who stands on the goal line behind the assistant referee.

- A kick scores when the whole ball crosses over the whole goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar. If the kicker touches the ball a second time, the kick is immediately deemed unsuccessful. The referee determines when the kick is concluded.
  - *Note: A ball that strikes the goal frame, the goalkeeper, or both, and then enters the goal is considered a successful kick. Generally speaking referees are advised to wait until the ball stops moving to declare a kick unsuccessful as spin on a ball can cause unpredictable bounces. The goalkeeper is permitted to play the ball more than once in an effort to keep it out of the goal.*
  - *Examples:*
    - *Goalkeeper dives and hits the ball into the air, where it hits the cross bar of the goal, bounces off the goalkeeper's foot, and rolls into the goal: **kick scores.***
    - *Goalkeeper saves the kick, and the ball bounces out in front of the goal; as goalkeeper walks away, the spinning ball rolls back into the goal: **kick scores.***
    - *Goalkeeper dives and makes contact with the ball, which continues to roll toward the goal; goalkeeper pounces on the ball while it is on top of the goal line: the kick does **not** score as the whole ball did not cross the whole goal line.*
- In general, Law 14 pertaining to penalty kicks applies during Penalties. Infringements of the Laws of the Game are handled as during a game:
  - If, in the opinion of the referee, the *goalkeeper infringes* the Laws of the Game and the kick is *not successful*, the kick is retaken.
  - If, in the opinion of the referee, the *kicker infringes* the Laws of the Game and the kick is successful, the kick is retaken.
  - If, in the opinion of the referee, *both* the kicker *and* the goalkeeper infringe the Laws of the Game, the kick is retaken, regardless of outcome.
    - *Note: Any time a kick must be retaken, the team **may** replace the kicker with a player who has not yet kicked. If this happens, the kicker whose kick was retaken is not considered to have taken a kick; the kicker who takes the retake is considered to have taken a kick. (In other words, a player is considered to have taken a kick only if the player's kick counted as a make or a miss.)*
    - *Note: A kick taken before the referee has blown the whistle is not an "infringement." Because the whistle was not blown, **the ball was not in play**, and the kick must be retaken **regardless of what happened**. (A second such offense may warrant a caution.)*
- Substitutions during Penalties are **not** permitted. If a player is injured or sent off, no substitute is permitted and the team continues with one fewer player.
  - An **exception** is made for injured goalkeepers. If the goalkeeper is injured, a substitute may enter the game to play goalkeeper. (The player entering to play goalkeeper becomes an eligible player who may also take kicks. If the injured goalkeeper had already taken a kick, the new goalkeeper is considered to have already taken a kick.)
  - *Note: Changing goalkeepers **from eligible participants in Penalties** is not a "substitution." Teams **may** change goalkeepers among eligible players **any time** during Penalties. (Coaches directing such changes should make sure they take place quickly.)*

## Ending Penalties

- Penalties end after the originally scheduled five kicks per team if one team is ahead.
- Penalties end *before* all five kicks have been taken if it becomes mathematically impossible for the team that is trailing to catch up.
  - Examples:
    - *After each team has kicked three times, one team has made all three and the other has missed all three. The most the trailing team can make is two, so the game is over. (This is the earliest it is possible to end Penalties.)*
    - *Team A makes its fifth kick to lead 4-2. Team B will not take fifth kick, as it has no chance to tie.*
- If at the end of the first five pairs of kicks the number of goals scored is tied, the kicks continue as follows:
  - Each new round is a single pair of kicks, one kick for each team.
  - The team that has been kicking first continues to kick first.
  - If one team makes the kick in a round and the other team misses, the Penalties are over and the team that made the kick prevails. If both teams miss or if both teams make the kick, Penalties continue to another round.
  - No player may take a second kick until **all eligible** players on the team have kicked (including the goalkeeper). If all eligible players have already kicked, a player will take a second kick.
    - *Note: Once all players have kicked, **any** player may take the next kick — the team does **not** have to take kicks in the same order that they did the first time around. (No player may take a third kick until every player has taken a second kick, etc.)*