

Subject: Youth Soccer Insider: Refing Futsal (Part 2): Getting restarts right and goalkeeper limitations

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Refing Futsal (Part 2): Getting restarts right and goalkeeper limitations

By Randy Vogt

My [last article](#) was an introduction to refereeing futsal and the taking of kicks from the second penalty mark. Let's move on to all the other restarts in futsal.

As mentioned in my last article, teams have four seconds to put the ball in play on restarts. If they do not play the ball within four seconds, the other team receives the ball.

There are corner kicks in futsal. Failure to play the ball within four seconds results in a goal clearance, futsal's version of a goal kick, to the opposing team.



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Corner kick (1)



Corner kick (2)

With a goal clearance, just like as with a goal kick, the opposing team must be outside the penalty area and the ball must be touched outside the penalty area to be in play. A goal clearance consists of the goalkeeper using his or her hands to release the ball back into play.



Goal clearance (1)



Goal clearance (2)

Instead of throw-ins, there are kick-ins in futsal. The ball must be placed on or just behind the touchline (up to 25 centimeters or 10 inches). The player taking the kick-in must have both feet on or behind the touchline when the ball is kicked. If he kicks the ball with his planted foot completely over the line, it's a "foot fault" and the opposing team receives a kick-in. Just as you cannot perform outdoor soccer's throw-in with one foot or both feet over the touchline and on the field of play.



Kick-in (1)



Kick-in (2)

With restarts, the opposing team must be five meters from the ball. A word of warning here. I have seen many refs in outdoor soccer have no issues getting 10 yards for free kicks in outdoor soccer yet become lazy and allow opponents to stand right by the ball on futsal restarts. If you allow this, do not be surprised if game control becomes an issue as the match progresses. As many futsal games are played in gyms with a gazillion lines, pick a line that the defender must be on or behind and simply ask him to go there.

There are both direct kicks and indirect kicks in futsal. Those rules are similar to outdoor soccer with the addition of a shoulder-to-shoulder charge is illegal in futsal so it's a direct kick as it is a charge.

The rule for goalkeeper possession is different than outdoor soccer. In futsal, when a keeper touches the ball with any part of his body, the next time he can touch the ball is after there has been a restart (kick-in, free kick, etc.), an opponent touches the ball or the keeper plays the ball in the offensive half of the field.

So let's say that red takes a shot that is saved by the blue keeper. The keeper rolls the ball to a teammate, who plays the ball to another teammate, to another teammate, to another teammate, now to the keeper, who plays the ball with his feet. You *cannot* do that and it's an indirect kick.

To avoid that, you needed a restart or opponent to touch the ball after the keeper played it or the keeper to receive the ball in the offensive half of the field.

Also punishable by an indirect kick is if the keeper plays the ball for four seconds in his defensive half of the field, even simply by dribbling the ball.

In outdoor soccer, when the ball goes in the air, the ref watches the players on the field as the action is there. It's different in futsal as the ref needs to also watch the trajectory of the ball. Should it hit the ceiling, it becomes a kick-in to the opposing team who did not touch the ball last by the touchline parallel to where it hit the ceiling.

In the next articles on refereeing futsal, I'll write about referee positioning, the challenges facing refs and which futsal rules youth soccer should modify for player development and keeping games on schedule.

[Reffing Futsal \(Part 1\): Calling and counting fouls](#)

Downloadable [Futsal Rulebook](#)

([Randy Vogt](#) has officiated over 9,000 games during the past three decades, from professional matches in front of thousands to 6-year-olds being cheered on by very enthusiastic parents. In [Preventive Officiating](#), he shares his wisdom gleaned from thousands of games and hundreds of clinics to help referees not only survive but thrive on the soccer field. You can visit the book's website at <http://www.preventiveofficiating.com/>)

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