

# 2021 RULE COMPARISON TABLE

## Side-by-side comparison: *Rules of Hockey* | NCAA | NFHS

This comparison table is meant to serve as a helpful reference for umpires officiating competitions governed by the *Rules of Hockey* (including the FIH Tournament Guidelines) and modifications published by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which governs intercollegiate competitions in the USA, and the rules that govern competitions between most high schools in the USA, which are published by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

### WHAT'S NEW (and important reminders from recent years)

1. NFHS: Goal signal now matches the signal used in games governed by the FIH rule (specifically, a hand is not raised before pointing both arms to center of the pitch)
2. NFHS (important reminders from 2020): Goggles are no longer mandatory | Safety masks can be worn while defending penalty corners | Mouth guards can now be completely white or completely clear | No team timeouts
3. FIH (important reminders from 2019): Teams can no longer defend with a Kicking Back | Time is stopped when a penalty corner is awarded, and the managing umpire whistles to permit the penalty corner to begin

### NOTABLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RULES OF HOCKEY AND NFHS GAMES

#### UMPIRE CONDUCT

- When carding, stopping the clock is not required. NFHS: Timeout required (Rule 4.2.2.d; 8.2.PENALTIES.1)

#### GENERAL PLAY

- Simultaneous fouls are not considered a possibility. NFHS: Simultaneous fouls are possible (Rule 8.PENALTIES.3)
- Defense can restart free hits for a breach by the attack inside the circle, anywhere inside the circle. NFHS: Restart must be in line with where the foul took place (9.1.2)

#### PENALTY CORNER

- Regular substitutions are not allowed between the time a penalty corner is awarded and completed. NFHS: Substitution is allowed during the penalty corner. Specifically, after the ball is inserted (Rule 4.4.3)
- A flick cannot be used to restart play on a penalty corner. NFHS: A flick is allowed (Rule 10.2.1)
- The ball is placed on the back-line at least 10 meters from either goalpost and not more than 14.6 meters (16 yards) away from the same goalpost. NFHS: The ball must be placed on the back-line exactly 10 yards from either goalpost (Rule 10.2.1). The ball can be moved further than 10 yards only if there is damage to the competition surface that must be avoided

#### SUBSTITUTIONS

- The captain is accountable for illegal substitutions. NFHS: The head coach is accountable for illegal substitutions (4.4.PENALTY and 4.4.8-PENALTY)

#### COMPOSITION OF TEAMS

- A goalkeeper is not required. NFHS: In high school field hockey, a goalkeeper is required (1.4.1)

#### CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

- The athlete is responsible for being legally equipped. NFHS: The coach ensures that all players and goalkeepers are properly dressed and legally equipped (1.9.1.b) and is carded if a player is found to be improperly dressed and/or illegally equipped (1.6.PENALTIES.1; 1.8.PENALTY; 12.1.PENALTIES)
- Eye and face protection are optional, but players may only wear metal eye/face protection during penalty corner defense. NFHS: Eye and face protection is optional, but metal goggles are allowed throughout the game
- Jewelry is permitted if not dangerous. NFHS: Jewelry shall not be worn except for religious or medical medals. Religious medals must be worn under the uniform. Both must be taped (1.5.7). Soft hair control devices are specifically allowed (1.5.6)

#### PERSONAL PENALTIES

- Time does not have to be stopped when carding. NFHS: Time must be stopped (Rule 4.2.2.d; 8.2.PENALTIES.1)
- A yellow card suspension is 5 minutes or longer in length. NFHS: A yellow card suspension for players is either 5 minutes or 10 minutes in length (8.2.PENALTIES.1.b; 12.1. PENALTIES.2)
- There are no additional penalties for fouls that are considered "flagrant" in nature. NFHS: A flagrant foul by a coach requires removal of a player and the team is further penalized by having to defend a penalty stroke (8.2.PENALTIES.2 and .4; 11.1.1.c and d; 12.1.Penalties.5)
- There is no provision for carding coaches. NFHS: Coaches can be green, yellow or red carded. A green card to a coach does NOT impact team composition but the team of a coach who is yellow or red carded plays short for the duration of the suspension/ejection (12.1.PENALTIES.1a-c). There is no 10 minute yellow card for coaches, only 5 minute yellow cards (12.PENALTIES.1.b).

The table is NOT a replacement for thorough knowledge of the rules or tournament regulations. Please visit USAFieldHockey.com periodically to ensure you have the most up-to-date table. Only in the items included in the table below can a significant difference be found between the rules and modifications governing the listed competition types. Changes from last year are **highlighted**. Points of significant difference are **underlined and in bold**.

	<b>Rules of Hockey</b> <i>Governs all levels of play – youth to the Olympics</i>	<b>NCAA Modifications</b> <i>Only governs games between colleges and universities</i>	<b>NFHS Rules</b> <i>Only governs games between high schools</i>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>			
<b>Clock: Duration of Half Time</b>	5 minutes	10 minutes	Not more than 10 minutes
<b>Clock: Time Outs</b>	No team timeouts	<i>Not Modified</i>	<i>Not Modified</i>
<b>Composition of Team: Minimum Number of Players on Field</b>	Teams may play with up to 11 players, one of whom <b><u>may be</u></b> a goalkeeper	<i>Not Modified</i>	Minimum of seven players; <b><u>one must be</u></b> a legally dressed and equipped goalkeeper (Rule 1.4.1)
<b>CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT (goalkeepers)</b>			
<b>Goalkeeper</b> <i>(describes legal dressed and equipped goalkeeper)</i>	Must wear a shirt/garment over any upper body protection; shirt must be of a color(s) different from field players of both teams; must wear protective equipment comprising of at least headgear, leg guards and kickers except when taking a penalty stroke	<i>Not Modified except the goalkeeper must wear chest and throat protection</i>	As with <i>Rules of Hockey</i> and NCAA except the goalkeeper must wear a helmet with fixed facemask, hand protection, and mouth guard; <b><u>the throat protector must be of a ‘wrap-around’ design</u></b> (Rule 1.8.1)
<b>CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT (all players)</b>			
<b>Shin Guards and knee socks</b>	Recommended, required at tournaments	Required, visiting team <b><u>can wear white</u></b>	Must be solid color. Home team <b><u>must wear white</u></b> (Rule 1.5.1.b)
<b>Mouth Guards</b>	Strongly recommended	Recommended for goalkeepers; Required for field players	Required for goalkeepers and players. <b><u>NEW: Can be white or clear</u></b> (Rule 1.5.3)
<b>Jewelry</b>	Subject to danger	<i>Not Modified</i>	Not permitted unless religious or medical and must be taped and may only be visible if medical (Rule 1.5.5)
<b>Undergarments</b>	Not stipulated	Must be the same as teammates; <b><u>home is dark; visitor is light</u></b>	Must match teammates; <b><u>home is white; visitor is dark</u></b> (Rule 1.5.1.b)
<b>Eye Protection, Field Players</b>	Optional with medical permission and <b><u>must not protrude</u></b> . Metal/cage masks may NOT be worn except during penalty corner defense	<i>Not Modified except medical permission is not required</i>	Eyewear protection is optional and <b><u>protruding metal goggles are permitted during open field play</u></b> for all field players; shall be worn as intended by the manufacturer and DO NOT HAVE TO meet the ASTM eyewear protection standard (Rule 1.6.5)
<b>Face Protection, Field Players</b>	Safety masks are allowed while defending PCs; must be flat and conforming to the face, medical need is not required in USA	<i>Not Modified</i>	Penalty corner safety face masks are optional (Rule 1.6.5)

**PROCEDURES FOR SET PIECES**

<b>Penalty Corner, Execution</b>	<b>Whistle is blown to start the penalty corner. Push or hit for insertion;</b> ball must travel outside circle before goal can be scored; the umpire does NOT stop play if ball does not exit the circle	<i>Not Modified</i>	<i>Not Modified except <b>the whistle is NOT blown to start play and the inserter can also flick the ball</b> (Rule 10.2.1)</i>
<b>Penalty Corners, Time Expired</b>	Played out to completion when awarded before time expires (never stop any penalty corner for expiration of time after insertion has taken place); penalty corners and penalty strokes awarded during a penalty corner that began before time expired are also completed	<i>Not Modified</i>	<i>Not Modified except when either team is two or more goals ahead the penalty corner is not played if the insertion has not taken place before time ends (Rules 10.3.3)</i>
<b>Penalty Stroke</b>	When the managing umpire is sure both players are ready the penalty stroke begins with the managing umpire’s whistle	<i>Not Modified</i>	The managing umpire <b>must ask</b> the goalkeeper and then the attacker if each is ready – lack of verbal response equals ‘Yes’ (Rules 11.2.4)
<b>CONDUCT OF PLAY (all players)</b>			
<b>Substitution</b>	Rolling sub allowed any time from center-line; timeout for all goalkeeper substitutions; <b>captain is accountable</b> for illegal substitutions	<i>Not Modified</i>	<i>Not Modified except that the <b>coach is accountable</b> for illegal substitutions (Rule 4.4.PENALTIES.1)</i>
<b>Simultaneous Fouls</b>	This is not applicable	<i>Not Modified</i>	Considered possible for misconduct fouls only (Rule 8.2.PENALTIES.3)
<b>Attacking Free Hits (inside the attacking 25-yard area)</b>	Ball must be dribbled or travel at least 5 <b>meters</b> or be touched by a defender before entering or being played into the circle	<i>Not Modified</i>	<i>Not Modified except <b>5 yards, not 5 meters</b>, which is 5 yards 2 feet (NFHS Rule 9.2.1.f)</i>
<b>Substitution at Penalty Corner</b>	Except for injured goalkeeper, once a PC has been awarded no substitutions are allowed until <b>after</b> the PC is completed	<i>Not Modified</i>	Substitutions allowed for any injured or sick player at any time; substitution allowed <b>during</b> penalty corner, i.e., as soon as the ball is inserted (Rule 10.2.10)

***INSIST ON UMPIRES  
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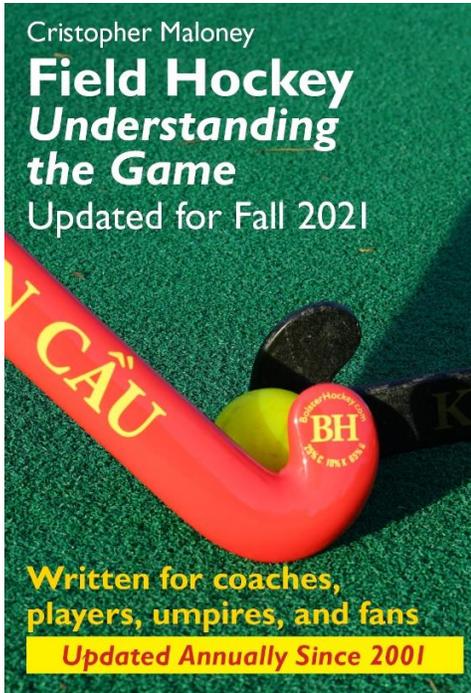
**PERSONAL PENALTIES – ALL PLAYERS**

<p><b>Player: Green Card</b>  <i>NOTE: In all levels of field hockey, the person playing goalkeeper who receives any card MUST leave the game</i></p>	<p><u>Stopping time is not required.</u>                  Two-minute suspension (play can be restarted while suspended player is still leaving the game, during the suspension team plays with one less player for each player suspended)</p>	<p><i>Not Modified</i></p>	<p><i>Not Modified except stopping time is required (Rule 8.PENALTIES.1)</i></p>
<p><b>Player: Yellow Card</b>  <i>NOTE: In all levels of field hockey, the person playing goalkeeper who receives any card MUST leave the game</i></p>	<p><u>Stopping time is not required.</u>                  Player suspended for <u>minimum of 5 minutes</u>; umpire notifies table the length of suspension and updates table if the suspension is extended due to suspended player’s additional misconduct during the suspension; <u>suspensions continue into overtime periods and the team competes with one less player during overtime for each player suspended</u>; table personnel manages return to play; the suspended player sits on the same side of table as his/her bench</p>	<p><i>Not modified</i></p>	<p><u>Stopping time IS required.</u>                  Suspension is for <b>exactly 5 or 10 minutes</b>; during the suspension team plays with one less player for each player suspended; if an NFHS goalkeeper is suspended an eligible player must be dressed as a goalkeeper and take the place in the game of the suspended goalkeeper (a field player is removed from the game by the coach at the start of the goalkeeper’s suspension; the field player who is pulled may return via substitution process during the suspension – the team continues to play short).  <u>Impact of suspensions during regulation on the composition of teams in overtime periods varies by local regulations</u>                  (Rule 8.PENALTIES.1 &amp; 1.b)</p>
<p><b>Player: Red Card</b>  <i>NOTE: In all levels of field hockey, the person playing goalkeeper who receives any card MUST leave the game</i></p>	<p><u>Stopping time is not required.</u>                  Person is disqualified; team plays down one player for each player disqualified; this continues through any overtime periods and tiebreakers. Additional sanctions likely apply</p>	<p><i>Not Modified</i></p>	<p><i>Not Modified except stopping time is required (Rule 8.PENALTIES.1)</i></p>

**PERSONAL PENALTIES – COACHES**

<p><b>Coach: Green Card</b>                  Head coach or acting head coach is responsible for all bench decorum issues.</p>	<p>This is not applicable</p>	<p>Given as a warning related to bench decorum issues</p>	<p>Stop time. Given as a warning related to bench decorum issues                  (Rule 12.PENALTIES.1 &amp; 1.a)</p>
<p><b>Coach: Yellow Card</b></p>	<p>This is not applicable</p>	<p><i>Not Modified</i></p>	<p>Stop time. Coach removes a player from game and team plays short for 5 minutes (never 10 minutes) per yellow card                  (Rule 12.PENALTIES.1 &amp; 1.b)</p>
<p><b>Coach: Red Card</b>                  Head coach or acting head coach is responsible for all bench decorum issues.</p>	<p>This is not applicable</p>	<p><u>Red card to coach does NOT cause the team to play short nor is a penalty stroke awarded.</u> Given after green card or flagrant individual misconduct. Coach must leave the field and cease all contact with team for duration of competition; if coach refuses to leave within 3 minutes, his/her team loses 1-0</p>	<p>Stop time. <u>Team plays short for remainder of game and if coach’s misconduct is flagrant the opponent is to take a penalty stroke</u>; red carded coaches must leave the site and if no other authorized school personnel is available to take head coach’s responsibilities, the head coach’s team forfeits                  (Rule 12.PENALTIES.1, 1.c, 1.d &amp; 1.e)</p>

**HAVE A QUESTION (Umpire, Players, Coaches, Assigners, Fans):** When you have a question, please submit it to USA Field Hockey’s ASK THE UMPIRE feature by sending an email to: [umpire@USAFieldHockey.com](mailto:umpire@USAFieldHockey.com)



*Field Hockey: Understanding the Game*. First published as *How to Umpire Field Hockey*, the content of *Understanding the Game* was expanded to be of greater interest to everyone in the field hockey community. This is one of the most highly reviewed field hockey books on Amazon. A common, and oddly accepted, lament heard at field hockey games goes something like this, "I've been watching field hockey for 10 years and I still don't understand what's going on." Field hockey just is not THAT complicated and, short of playing for 20 years, this book will help you better understand the game whether you are a player, coach, fan, reporter, or umpire. Though not a rule book, *Field Hockey: Understanding the Game* has photos of the umpiring signals and is updated annually reflecting rule changes made by the FIH, NCAA, and NFHS.

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