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NFHS Soccer Weekly Rule Interpretations

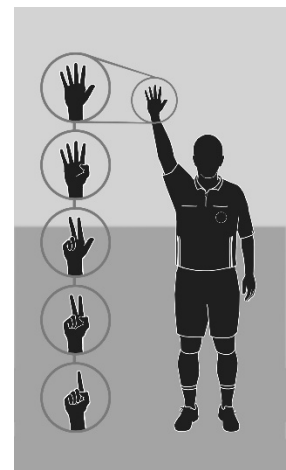
Goalkeeper Restrictions Rule 12-3-3

Eight (8) Second Rule for Goalkeepers

The first three (3) seconds of the countdown are done silently. Goalkeepers should be given a moment to collect themselves and start the process of rising to their feet after making a save before the count begins. If the goalkeeper delays rising to their feet, the referee should inform them that the count has begun. The beginning of the count is the referee discretion. The last five (5) seconds is counted down visually and verbally.

Fully extend the arm above the head and show the number of seconds remaining. If the count reaches zero and the goalkeeper is still holding the ball, a corner kick is awarded.

Note: stay alert for attempts by the attacker to slow down the goalkeeper's release or attempt to release the ball. In this scenario the referee may pause the count or award an indirect free kick (IDFK).



SITUATION: The goalkeeper controls the ball with their hands for longer than 8 seconds.

RULING: Illegal, the opposing team is awarded a corner kick. **COMMENT:** If the goalkeeper controls the ball with their hands for longer than eight seconds before releasing the ball, the opposing team is awarded a corner kick.

SITUATION: After Team A's goalkeeper has gained possession of the ball by use of hands, the goalkeeper pushes or rolls the ball along the ground and then retrieves or touches the ball with a hand (a) before the ball is touched by any other player; (b) after the ball is kicked by opposing Player B. **RULING:** (a) Illegal and (b) legal. **COMMENT:** The goalkeeper has relinquished possession of the ball after the initial push or roll. The goalkeeper cannot touch the ball again with their hand until it has been touched by another player. In (a), Team B is awarded an indirect free kick from where the goalkeeper touched the ball with their hand. This goalkeeper

offense is not sanctioned as misconduct under 12-3-3d, even if the illegal repossession stops a promising attack or denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity.

SITUATION: Goalkeeper A4 is holding the ball with their hands and throws the ball in the air to punt it down the field. Before the goalkeeper kicks the ball, player B2 (a) challenges the goalkeeper, using their head to contact the ball; (b) jumps in front of A4 to block the goalkeeper from releasing the ball. **RULING:** Illegal in (a) and (b). **COMMENT:** The goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball while bouncing or throwing the ball as part of kicking or punting the ball. Team A is awarded in (a) a direct free kick [12-1-2c], and in (b) an indirect free kick [12-3-2]. Referees should be aware of attackers hanging around after the goalkeeper has secured possession. If their sole purpose is to hamper the distribution the referee must recognize and address this accordingly.

SITUATION: Goalkeeper A4 catches the ball in the air with no pressure around them they voluntarily drop to their knees and then the ground as a delay tactic. The referee started the 8 second count immediately. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** There was no reason to drop to the ground so the eight (8) second count should start immediately. Referees are encouraged to verbally alert the goalkeeper that their time limit has begun.

SITUATION: Goalkeeper A4 dives to make a save and takes a second to get to their feet. The referee allows A4 a moment to collect themselves before the count begins. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** Since the referee considers the goalkeeper's actions a natural part of making a save, and not a delay tactic, it is fair to give them a moment to collect themselves before the count is started.