

INTERNATIONAL TABLE SOCCER FEDERATION

REFEREE CODE

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1. REFEREES

The recruiting, formation and regulation of Referees, also referred to here as Officials, is the responsibility of the ITSF Rules Commission in cooperation with its member Federations. Federations are permitted to train and certify new ITSF Referees according to the program put forth by the ITSF Rules Commission who has the final authority in determining ranking and eligibility to officiate at ITSF sanctioned events.

1.1. Becoming a Referee

Anyone who wishes to become a certified ITSF Official must be a member of an ITSF Federation. The process for becoming a Referee begins with mandatory attendance at an approved Official's Clinic, which is typically held at most major tournaments, followed by passing a written examination and evaluation of ability.

1.1.1. Education

The training of new officials includes the teaching of common rules, identify jarring, resets, and other such infractions as well as the procedures for stopping play to make calls. It is important for referees to be sufficiently knowledgeable of the rules, be able to quickly recognize violations and to be firm and confident when enforcing penalties.

1.1.2. Testing

Upon completion of the education and training segment of the Officials Clinic, a written test will be administered to determine if the candidate has sufficient knowledge of the rules.

1.1.3. Evaluation

Once the person passes the written exam, he/she shall be assigned to referee matches together with a National rated Official or higher for evaluation and ranking. Newly certified referees will be promoted to the next level by the Rules Commission based on their experience and performance.

2. LEVELS OF OFFICIALS

The Rules Commission of the ITSF has specified the following ranks for Referees:

- Assistant Official
- Regional Official
- National Official
- International Official*
- International Official**

Federations shall initially rank newly certified referees as Assistant Officials until properly evaluated and promoted to the appropriate level based on experience and ability. Each Federation is authorized to promote referees up to the level of National Official and may petition the Rules Commission to request that a higher level be assigned.

2.1. Assistant Official

Assistant Official's may not officiate matches without a higher ranked referee at the table. Assistants are considered to be in a training period until properly evaluated and promoted to the next level.

2.2. Regional Official

Regional Officials may officiate matches without a higher ranked official present at ITSF Pro Tour events within their local geographical area. A Regional Official may not referee matches in a Masters, International or World Championship Series tournament without a higher ranked official present and according to the chart below (see 3.6.).

2.3. National Official

National Officials may officiate matches without a higher ranked official present at all ITSF tournaments, within their own country and local geographical region with the exception of World Championship Series events and according to the chart below (see 3.6.).

2.4. International* and International** Official

The rank of International one star and two stars is decided by the ITSF Rules Commission taking many factors into consideration. These considerations include overall knowledge of the rules, authority at the table, and respect of the players and other referees. International Officials may referee at any ITSF tournament without restrictions.

3. OFFICIATING MATCHES

It is essential that referees be available to officiate matches at tournaments to help ensure a fair environment for the competitors. Officiating matches is an admirable responsibility which can be both rewarding and fulfilling.

3.1. Availability at Tournaments

When a certified ITSF Official registers to play in a tournament he/she will automatically be added to the list of referees available to officiate matches during the competition. If the referee is not registered in any events on a given day then he/she will be considered unavailable unless otherwise indicated.

3.2. Obligation to Officiate

An ITSF Official is required to officiate matches when called upon but may be excused in the following circumstances:

- If the Referee has been or is soon to be called up to play a match.
- If the Referee has recently finished a match and wishes to leave the tournament site.
- If there is a close relationship with any member of either team to be officiated.
- Any other reason considered valid by the Rules Commission, Tournament Director, or Head Official.

3.2.1. Penalty for Refusing to Officiate

On the first occasion that an ITSF Referee refuses to officiate a match without a valid reason he/she will be issued a warning. Upon further refusals the Rules Commission will suspend the official for a period of time and may revoke his/her referee status. The penalty and period of suspension will be determined by the Rules Commission. The referee will be given a reasonable amount of time to file an appeal.

3.3. Referee Code of Conduct

Referees should not engage in arguments with any player or provoke them into aggressive actions. ITSF Officials must display exemplary behavior and respect towards the players, spectators, tournament organizers, the media, and their fellow referees. More specifically, Referees must present themselves in a manner that exhibits a highly professional and respectful image of the sport.

3.4. Behavior Toward Officials

All Referees have the right to be respected for their position and should not be impeded in any way from exercising their duties and responsibilities at a tournament. Players who improperly challenge an official or behave in a disrespectful way toward an official will be subject to disciplinary action according to the rules of the Disciplinary Commission.

3.5. Impartiality of Officials

All referees must be exceedingly fair and impartial when officiating matches. Any bias or favoritism will not be tolerated and will be treated in the most serious manner.

3.5.1. Reporting a Referee for Bias

A team or player who believes they are the victim of biased actions from an official may file a complaint with the ITSF Rules Commission within one month after the date of the incident. The Rules Commission will evaluate the claim and forward it to the Disciplinary Commission if further action is required.

3.5.2. Penalty for Referee Guilty of Bias

Referees who are found guilty of bias after a formal review of reports submitted by the referee, players, and other witnesses will have their Referee status revoked and will not be permitted to officiate matches in an ITSF sanctioned tournament indefinitely.

3.6. Tournament Authorization Chart

Referees are authorized to officiate matches according to the following chart. In extraordinary circumstances the Head Official or Tournament Director may permit Referees to officiate matches beyond the level specified in the chart.

	Master Series (ITSF 3) or Pro tour (ITSF 4)	World Championship Series (ITSF 1) or International (ITSF 2)
Assistant Official: <i>To be supervised by a National Official or higher</i>	Up to the last 16	Up to the last 64
Regional Official	Up to the quarter finals	Up to the last 16
National Official	All	Up to the semi-finals
International* and International** Official	All	All

3.7. Review of Officials

The rankings of Officials are valid for the entire tournament year. Rankings can be changed during the course of the season based on the Official's performance plus feedback from players, referees, and tournament directors. The ITSF Rules Commission will also accept recommendations from Member Federation's Head Official or Sport Commission.

3.8. Payment to Referees

The ITSF Rules Commission shall set the amounts to be paid to the Referees for the entire tournament year. The amount of payment is based on the level of the tournament as specified by the ITSF and the ranking of the Referee (see Annex III)

4. OFFICIATING

Referees should exercise their officiating duties in a consistent manner while adhering to the standard procedures specified in this manual and as instructed by the ITSF Rules Commission.

4.1. Official Terms

Jar (Jarring): Slamming a rod into the table during play which jeopardizes the opponent's possession of the ball.

Reset: Bumping a rod into the table which does not affect the opponent's possession but hinders the player's ability to execute a pass or shot.

Distraction: Making noises or movements during play that are deemed to divert the opponent's attention away from the play.

Dead Ball: A ball which has completely stopped moving on the table and is out of reach of all player figures.

Serve: Process of putting the ball into play at the beginning of the game, after a point is scored or as determined by rule. The Serve begins at the middle man of the five man rod.

Ready Protocol: Method for ensuring that the opponent is ready before serving the ball or resuming play. After both teams are deemed ready, the player in possession of the ball must touch two men and wait one second before the ball may be advanced.

Possession: The ball is within reach of a player figure and in control or has been played forward or backwards by striking the ball.

4.2. Officiating Procedures

It is important that Referees speak clearly and decisively when calling infractions and be ready to explain the reason for making a call quickly and accurately without delaying the game.

4.2.1. Position at the Table

The Referee should stand at the left side corner of the table and should remain still during play to avoid distracting the players or obstructing the view of spectators.

4.2.2. Detection of Jarring

The Referee should place a hand on the table to help determine if any jarring occurs. It is advisable to position the hand in a manner that will not be considered distracting to the players.

4.2.3. Stopping Play

When a violation has occurred, the Referee should raise his/her hand above the table and direct the players to hold the ball and stop play.

4.3. Officiating Equipment

Tournament Directors are required to provide the necessary equipment essential to officiating matches. The equipment and appearance of Referees helps to project an image of authority that gains the respect of the players and helps to assure compliance when a call needs to be made.

4.3.1. The Scoreboard

The scoreboard must be completed with the utmost care as it is can be very helpful in keeping track of the games, scores, violations, etc. The Scoreboard is also an official document that needs to be submitted for Referee payment and may also be consulted in case of dispute. The official scoreboard is provided as Annex IV of the present Referee Code.

4.3.2. The Stopwatch

The Stopwatch is required to keep track of time of possession, duration of time outs, and time between games. It is preferable to use stopwatches that do not distract the players by making beeping sounds.

4.3.3. Official Patches and Attire

Referees are required to wear an official Referee shirt and ITSF patch indicating the Referees ranking when officiating matches. The official attire and patches are listed in Annex V of the present Referee Code.

ANNEX I - Introduction to the rule book

- a- The rule book is meant as a guide to assist the Officials. Its goal is above all to explain the rules of the game. And so, as much as the Officials goal is to show his/her authority for the good of the game, he/she must also be careful not to slow it down by a too strict arbitration.
- b- Reminder: Federation Officials represent the highest authority of the rulebook in a tournament. Their decisions must be respected and cannot be disputed. A Federation Official can be called upon to advise on interpretations of the rulebook. If no Federation Official is present at the tournament, the Tournament Director assumes the duties of a Federation Official.
- c- The rules of the game of table soccer are conceived as much to facilitate ruling by Officials as by the Players themselves.
- d- The objective is to limit subjective interpretations to an absolute minimum.
- e- The aim of the rules is also to bring the game to a level of mutual respect between the Players while seeming transparent to the spectators.
- f- We remind the reader that while the Official is indisputable he/she is also fallible and error of judgment can be a part of the game.

QUALIFIED AUTHORITIES

- a - This rulebook has been written and edited by the Rules Commission under the responsibility of the Sports Commission. It is put to a vote and set up at the beginning of each season by the Executive Committee of the ITSF (International Table Soccer Federation). It can be examined and amended in a general assembly.
- b - In cases of inconsistencies or of difficult situations, immediate amendments can be proposed by the Rules Commission in course of the season. These amendments must then be put to a vote by the Executive Committee.
- c - The use of the rulebook is the responsibility of the Federation Officials, the Officials and the Players.
- d - The matches can be either arbitrated or auto-arbitrated. In an arbitrated match, the Official is the qualified authority. In a match without an Official, any Official by title that is present on the premises can be solicited. In the event of an unsolvable difficulty, the Head Official can be summoned. They are responsible to make the decision known to the Sports Commission which in turn is responsible to make this decision widely known to the members.
- e - An Official, solicited in mid-game in order to solve a problem, may receive advices from other Officials who witnessed the incident. If more than one Official was present, he/she will receive advice from the highest graded Official (up to Federation Official). If no Official is present, the solicited Official will call for the continuation of the game, without granting any request for Fault or goal.
- f - Questions, requests for explanations, as well as requests for modifications of the rules, must be addressed to the Head Official. He/she in turn answers to the person in charge of the Sports Commission.
- g - The penalties and sanctions involving the loss of a game or match is the responsibility of the referee at the table. In the event of a more serious sanction, a report must be transmitted by the Tournament Director to the Discipline Commission.
- h - These rules can be modified or adapted during a tournament in very exceptional circumstances with the consent of an ITSF Delegate and/or an ITSF Head Official. Any changes must be reported to the Sport Commission and the ITSF Executive Committee immediately for confirmation or the tournament can be disqualified from the ITSF ranking.

Rule 1: Code of Ethics

Any action of an unsportsmanlike or unethical nature during tournament play, in the tournament room, or on the grounds of the host facility, will be considered a violation of the Code of Ethics. Mutual respect between all players, officials and/or spectators is a requirement. It shall be the aim of every player and official to represent table-soccer in the most positive and sportsmanlike manner possible.

1. 1. The penalty for breaking the Code of Ethics may be forfeiture of a game or match, expulsion from the tournament, and/or a fine. Whether or not the Code of Ethics has been broken, and what is the appropriate penalty for the infraction will be determined by the ITSF Disciplinary Commission or if not present by the Head Official and Tournament Director.

Rule 11: Official Time Out

An official time out does not count towards the two time outs allowed per team per game. After an official time out, the ball is put back into play as though a regular time out were called.

- 11.1 If an official is not present at the start of the match, and a dispute arises during play, either team may request an official. Such a request can be made at any point during the match that the ball is stopped or dead.
 - 11.1.1 The first request for an official is considered an official time out.
 - 11.1.2 If the defensive team makes a request for an official while the ball is in play and stopped, and the offensive team simultaneously attempts a pass or shot, the request for a time out will be treated as a distraction by the defensive team. Likewise, a request for an official while the ball is in motion will also be considered a distraction.
- 11.2 Once play has resumed with an official at the table, any player requesting a second official will automatically be charged with a time out. Such a request may only be made during a dead ball or when the ball is not in play. The penalty for requesting another official while the ball is in play is a technical foul.
 - 11.2.1 If play has resumed with two officials at the table any request to replace an official will be decided by the head official or tournament director. If the request is denied, the player shall be charged with a technical foul.
- 11.3 A team may not switch positions during an official time out, unless they are otherwise entitled to do so (see 14).
- 11.4 Table Maintenance - Any necessary table maintenance, such as changing balls, tightening the men, etc., must be requested before the start of the match. The only time that a player may call a table maintenance time out during a match would be in the case of a sudden alteration to the table, such as a broken man, broken screw, crumbling bumper, bent rod, etc.
 - 11.4.1 If a player figure is broken while in contact with the ball, an official time out will be declared while the rod is fixed. Play will resume on the rod where the player figure broke.
 - 11.4.2 If the table lighting fails, play shall immediately stop at that point (as though an official time out were called).
 - 11.4.3 Routine maintenance, such as spraying the rods, etc., should only be done during time outs and between games.
- 11.5 Foreign objects on field of play - if an object should fall on the playfield, play shall immediately stop at that point and the object shall be removed. Play shall resume from the rod where the ball was when the object hit the playfield. There should be nothing on the ends of the table that could fall onto the playfield. If the ball is in motion it will be put back into play by the player who had last possession.

11.5.1 If the ball comes into contact with a foreign object on the playfield that was overlooked play shall stop and the object shall be removed. Play shall continue at the rod of possession when play was stopped.

11.6 Medical time out - a player or team may request a medical time out. This request must be approved by the Tournament Director, the Head Official, or the referee of the match if the medical necessity is evident. They will determine the length of the medical time out, up to a maximum of 60 minutes. A player who is physically unable to continue playing after that time must forfeit the match.

11.6.1 If the request for a medical time out is denied, the player will be charged with a time out. The player may also be penalized for delay of game (see 25), at the discretion of the official.

Rule 22: Language and Behavior

Unsportsmanlike conduct or comments made directly or indirectly by a player are not allowed. Violations of this rule may be grounds for a technical foul.

22.1 Calling the attention of the opposing team away from the game is not allowed (see Rule 20). Any shouts or sounds made during a match, even if of an enthusiastic nature, may be grounds for a technical foul.

22.2 Cursing by a player shall not be allowed. The penalty for cursing is a technical foul. Continued cursing by a player may be cause for forfeiture of games and/or expulsion from the tournament site.

22.3 The use of a spotter in the audience shall not be allowed. Furthermore, a member of the audience is not allowed to influence a match by distracting a player or official. Violation of this rule may be grounds for expulsion of the person from the tournament site.

22.4 Coaching will be allowed, but only during time outs and between games.

Rule 28: Rules Decisions and Appeals

If a controversy involves a question of judgment and the official is present at the time the events in question transpired, his/her decision is final and no appeal may be made. If the controversy involved an interpretation of the rules, or the official was not present at the time the events in question transpired, the official shall make the most equitable decision possible under the circumstances. Decisions of this nature may be appealed, but it must be done immediately in the manner prescribed below.

28.1 In order to appeal a rules interpretation, a player must file that appeal with the official before the ball being played at the time of the controversy is put back into play. An appeal concerning the loss of a match must be filed before the team that won has begun its next match.

28.2 All rule appeals shall be considered by the Head Official and (if present) at least two members of the officiating staff. All decisions on appeals are final.

28.3 A team making an unsuccessful rules appeal of an obvious nature, or a team that questions a judgment call, will be charged with a time out. In addition, the team may also be penalized for delay of game, at the discretion of the official.

28.4 Arguing with an official during a match will not be allowed. Violation of this rule will be grounds for a delay of game penalty and/or a violation of the code of ethics.

ANNEX II – about Disciplinary Rules

The Referee at the table is responsible for ensuring that a fair match is played between the competitors. The primary referee and his/her assistant, or any other persons delegated by the ITSF or Tournament Director, are due the respect and consent of the players to properly administer his/her duties.

Authority

During the match, the referee is given full power and authority to issue warnings and penalties as defined by the Disciplinary Rules and as specified in this present code. The Referees decisions are final and cannot be submitted to the disciplinary authorities of the ITSF.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. Any player who interferes with an opponent or disrupts the tournament shall be issued a warning from the referee or tournament official.
2. If a player has been warned but continues to behave in an unsportsmanlike manner he/she shall be penalized by the Organization Committee or the ITSF Delegate which may be the administering of a fine, expulsion, or both.

Player Suspensions

Acts of disrespect, intimidation or aggression towards Players or Referees will not be tolerated. The ITSF Disciplinary Commission shall determine the length of suspension up to the maximum.

Acts toward players:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Unsportsmanlike conduct | <i>One-year ineligibility</i> |
| 2. Physical assault | <i>Two-year ineligibility</i> |
| 3. Causing serious physical harm | <i>Lifetime ineligibility</i> |
| 4. A fine may also be imposed in all cases. | |

Acts Toward Referees:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Unsportsmanlike conduct | <i>Two-year ineligibility</i> |
| 2. Physical assault | <i>Four-year ineligibility</i> |
| 3. Causing serious physical harm | <i>Lifetime Ineligibility</i> |
| 4. A fine may also be imposed in all cases. | |

For more details on disciplinary matters and procedures, please review the ITSF Disciplinary Rules.

ANNEX III - Compensation of Referees

Each participant of an ITSF Sanctioned tournament must pay to the Tournament Director an Officiating Fee according to the following system.

5 € for a World Championship Series

3 € up to 5 € maximum for all other ITSF sanctioned tournaments

It is the Tournament Director's responsibility to collect the amounts from the participants and to distribute payments to the referees based on number of games officiated according to the chart below.

The Tournament Director is permitted to keep any non-disbursed funds but is also responsible for all amounts due for officiating.

Matches officiated during qualification rounds are not subject to referee compensation.

Referees must submit a completed Official Scoreboard to receive payment

Level of Official	All ITSF Sanctioned Tournaments
Assistant Official	2 €/ game
Regional Official	3 €/ game
National Official	3 €/ game
International Official* **	5 €/ game

A second Official at the table is compensated as an Assistant regardless of his/her actual rank.

ANNEX IV - Official scoreboard

(See next page)

Official Scoreboard

TOURNAMENT	COMPETITION	COMPETITION LEVEL

PRINCIPAL REFEREE	ASSISTANT REFEREE
First/last name:	First/last name:
Number and level:	Number and level:

TEAM A				First and last names	TEAM B													
SCORE					Game	SCORE												
1	2	3	4	5	Time outs <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	1°	1	2	3	4	5	Time outs <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5		2°	1	2	3	4	5							
1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	3°	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	4°	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	5°	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Resets	Delays of game	Distractions	Illegal serves	Faults per game	Resets	Delays of game	Distractions	Illegal serves										
				1°														
				2°														
				3°														
				4°														
				5°														
Jars	Technical fouls	Illegal practise	Unsportsmanlike behaviour	Faults per match	Jars	Technical fouls	Illegal practise	Unsportsmanlike behaviour										

TEAM A	PRINCIPAL REFEREE	ASSISTANT REFEREE	TEAM B
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:
	Number of game(s) refereed:	Number of game(s) refereed:	
Signature:	Signature:	Signature:	Signature:

Please circle the winner. This official scoreboard must be completed, signed and returned to the registration table.

Payment of the principal referee: $x =$ Payment of the assistant referee: $x =$ <i>Amount = number of game(s) refereed x payment rate (according to status, qualification level, tournament level and the competition level)</i> Payment made on / / by (first name, last name, capacity and signature):

ANNEX V: Referees Attire and Patches

- Official attire (shirt) :



- Official patches (to be worn on the shirt sleeves):

