



# **APEX PREMIER LEAGUE (APL)**

## **OFFICIAL RULEBOOK — SEASON 1**

**Season Duration:** 12 Weeks

**League Type:** Franchise Football Competition

**Organized By:** Apex Premier League

**Edition:** Season 1

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Apex Premier League (APL) is a competitive football league established to elevate district and regional football through professional organization, elite competition standards, media-driven presentation, and long-term football development.

APL operates under principles of:

- Fair competition
- Professional conduct
- Player development
- Entertainment and fan engagement
- League integrity

All teams, players, officials, and staff participating in APL Season 1 agree to comply with this rulebook.

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## 2. LEAGUE STRUCTURE

### 2.1 Competition Format

- Total Teams: 16
  - Squad Size: Maximum 18 players
  - Minimum Registered Players: 14
  - Starting XI: 11 players
  - Bench Size: 7 substitutes
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### 2.2 Season Duration

The official duration of APL Season 1 shall be:

12 Weeks

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## 2.3 Competition Phases

### Phase 1 — Group Stage

- 16 teams divided into 4 groups of 4
  - Each team plays every other team in its group once
  - Total Matches Per Team: 3
  - Top 2 teams from each group qualify
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### Phase 2 — League Phase

- 8 qualified teams enter Elite League Phase
  - Home & away format
  - League table determines top 4
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### Phase 3 — Playoffs

- 1st vs 4th
- 2nd vs 3rd

Single-leg semi-finals.

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### Phase 4 — Final

Winners of semi-finals compete in:

APL Season 1 Grand Final

Venue announced by APL Committee.

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## 3. POINTS SYSTEM

Result	Points
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Win	3
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Draw	1
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Loss	0
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## 4. TIEBREAKER RULES

If teams finish level on points, rankings will be determined by:

1. Goal Difference
  2. Goals Scored
  3. Head-to-Head Record
  4. Fair Play Record
  5. Penalty Shootout or Committee Decision (if necessary)
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## 5. PLAYER REGISTRATION

### 5.1 Eligibility

All players must:

- Submit valid ID proof
- Provide accurate registration information
- Be officially approved before participation

Accepted IDs:

- Aadhaar Card
  - School ID
  - College ID
  - Government-issued identification
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### 5.2 Registration Deadline

All squads must be finalized before the league start date.

No unregistered player may participate.

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### 5.3 Squad Lock

Once the group stage begins:

squads are officially locked.

No transfers allowed unless approved under exceptional circumstances by the APL Committee.

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## **6. MATCH RULES**

### **6.1 Match Duration**

- 90 minutes total
  - 45-minute halves
  - 15-minute halftime
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### **6.2 Substitutions**

- Maximum 5 substitutions allowed
- Maximum 3 stoppages during normal time

Half-time substitutions do not count as stoppages.

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### **6.3 Minimum Players**

A match may not begin with fewer than:

7 players

Failure results in forfeiture.

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## **7. DISCIPLINE & FAIR PLAY**

### **7.1 Yellow Cards**

- 2 accumulated yellow cards:  
1-match suspension

Accumulation resets after semi-finals.

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## 7.2 Red Cards

Straight red card:

automatic 2-match suspension

Violent conduct may result in:

- extended suspension
  - season ban
  - permanent disqualification
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## 7.3 Abuse & Misconduct

The following are strictly prohibited:

- referee abuse
- crowd violence
- racial/religious abuse
- physical fights
- threats/intimidation
- damaging property

APL reserves authority to:

- suspend
- fine
- disqualify
- permanently ban

individuals or teams.

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## 8. WALKOVER RULE

Teams must report within:

20 minutes of kickoff time

Failure to appear results in:

- 3–0 loss
- possible disciplinary action

Two walkovers may result in: tournament disqualification

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## 9. PLAYOFF RULES

### 9.1 Semi-finals & Final

If tied after 90 minutes:

- 30 minutes extra time
- penalty shootout if necessary

No replays.

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## 10. MATCHDAY OPERATIONS

### 10.1 Team Responsibilities

Each team must:

- arrive on time
  - maintain discipline
  - wear approved kits
  - respect officials
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### 10.2 Kit Rules

- Matching jerseys mandatory
- Numbers compulsory
- No duplicate colours within same fixture

APL may require alternate kits.

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## 11. REFEREES & OFFICIALS

All referee decisions are:

final during gameplay, Only captains may communicate formally with referees.

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## **12. MEDIA & BROADCAST RIGHTS**

APL owns:

- official media rights
- livestream rights
- photography rights
- league branding rights

APL may:

- publish player/team content
- create promotional media
- distribute league footage

Participation implies consent.

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## **13. PROTESTS & APPEALS**

Formal complaints must:

- be submitted within 24 hours
- include evidence
- be filed by team management only

APL Committee decisions are final.

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## 14. WEATHER & MATCH DELAYS

APL reserves authority to:

- postpone
- suspend
- relocate
- reschedule

matches due to:

- weather
  - safety concerns
  - ground conditions
  - unforeseen circumstances
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## 15. TROPHIES & AWARDS

### Team Awards

- APL Champions Trophy
  - Runner-Up Award
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### Individual Awards

- Golden Boot
  - Golden Glove
  - Player of the Tournament
  - Young Player Award
  - Best Team Award
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## **16. CODE OF PROFESSIONALISM**

APL aims to establish a:

modern, disciplined, and elite football environment.

All participants are expected to uphold:

- sportsmanship
- professionalism
- respect
- league integrity

Failure to maintain standards may result in disciplinary action.

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## **17. APL COMMITTEE AUTHORITY**

The APL Committee reserves the right to:

- modify rules if necessary
- resolve disputes
- protect league integrity
- enforce disciplinary measures

All committee decisions shall be final.

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# **APEX PREMIER LEAGUE**

## **SEASON 1**

**Rise Above.**