

Assistant Referees Flag Technique Simple Training Program

Andrew Castiglione

Founder of Ken Aston Referee Society

The aim of this document is to provide a simple flexible way to practically train Assistant Referees in the art of carrying and using the flag whilst running along the touchline. The training does not have to be done on a field of play touchline; it can be done anywhere, where there is a maximum 60-meter long area. This program is primarily for an Instructor's use whilst training Referees, but it can also be used by an individual.

This program contains three sections.

The Flag Signals.

Setting up the Training.

Flag Tips.



The Flag Signals

The image above shows the various flag and lining positions that an Assistant Referee will need to use.

1. Corner Kick Flag Signal: The Assistant Referee should run to the corner flag, then turn to face towards the center Referee, whilst pointing the Flag downwards towards the base of the corner flag post, using the hand that is nearest to the goal line. During training the instructor should shout "**CORNER**" to get the Assistant Referees to sprint to the corner flag and make the signal.

2. Goal Kick flag signal: Face towards the halfway line at right angles to the field of play whilst pointing the flag into the field of play at 90 degrees away from the body. Stand (or move) adjacent to the goal area line (approx 5.5m (6 yds) up the touch line, away from the corner flag. During training the instructor should shout "**GOAL KICK**" to get the Assistant Referees to sprint to the correct position and make the signal.

3. Attention Referee!: Wave the flag 'to and fro' above you. Use this signal to gain the attention of the center Referee. (For example - when violent conduct has been seen.) Wave the flag vigorously backwards and forwards until the center Referee sees it. During training the instructor should shout "**ATTENTION REFEREE**" to get the Assistant Referees to stop immediately and make the signal by waving their flag 'to and fro' in the air.

4. Throw-in to the right: Facing the field of play - put the flag out at a 45-degree angle from the body indicating the direction of the throw-in. Use the right arm to indicate right. During training the instructor should shout, "**THROW-IN RIGHT**" to get the Assistant Referees to stop immediately and make the correct signal.

5. Throw-in to the left: Facing the field of play - put the flag out at a 45-degree angle from the body indicating the direction of the throw-in. Use the left arm to indicate left. During training the instructor should shout "**THROW-IN LEFT**" to get the Assistant Referees to stop immediately and make the correct signal.

6. Crabbing: This is a method whereby the Assistant Referee faces the field of play and moves his body to the left or to the right by using crab-like leg movements to shift sideways, for the purpose of keeping in line with the second last slow moving defender. The flag must remain unfurled and visible to the center Referee at all times.

During training the instructor should shout, "**CRAB LEFT**" and "**CRAB RIGHT**" to train the Assistant Referees to acclimatize to a constantly changing direction up and down the touchline.

7 & 8. Running and sprinting and jogging: The Assistant Referee will need to train by running at different speeds interspersed with pauses. Apart from the physical training itself, the most important aspect of these maneuvers, is to get the Assistant Referees to change the flag from hand to hand to ensure that the flag is always facing INWARDS to the field of play. This will give the center Referee maximum visibility of the flag at all times.

During training the instructor should shout out a variable combination of "**RUN LEFT**": "**RUN RIGHT**": "**JOG LEFT**": "**JOG RIGHT**": "**SPRINT LEFT**": "**SPRINT RIGHT**": "**PAUSE**":

9. Offside Signal: Put the flag straight up (no waving) to indicate to the center Referee, that an offside offence has occurred - then as soon as the center Referee has seen the flag signal, put the flag down to one of the following varied 3 positions (far, center or near.). During training the instructor should shout out "**OFFSIDE**" followed by one of the following 3 positions. It can sometimes happen, that the center Referee will want to keep play going when an offside has been flagged. He will acknowledge his Assistant Referee with an upraised arm. The Assistant Referee should then immediately drop the flag and continue with his duties. The instructor should demonstrate this maneuver by firstly explaining the center Referee's arm signal, and then using the signal during training to test the Assistant Referees.

10: Offside Far: Face the field of play and raise the flag at a 45 degree angle upwards into the sky, pointing into the field of play. This indicates to the center Referee that an offside offence has occurred on the far side of the field of play. During training the instructor should shout out "**OFFSIDE**" followed by "**OFFSIDE FAR**"

11. Offside Center (or Middle): Face the field of play and raise the flag at a 90-degree angle outwards from the body, pointing into the field of play. This indicates to the center Referee that an offside offence has occurred on the far side of the field of play. During training the instructor should shout out "**OFFSIDE**" followed by "**OFFSIDE CENTRE**"

12: Offside near: Face the field of play and raise the flag at a 45 degree angle upwards from the ground, pointing downwards into the field of play. This indicates to the center Referee that an offside offence has occurred on the near side of the field of play. During training the instructor should shout out "**OFFSIDE**" followed by "**OFFSIDE NEAR**"

13: Substitution Required: To inform the center Referee that a substitution is requested, raise the flag and hold it horizontal above the face. Do not place the flag in front of the face. It should be held slightly to one side to allow for unimpaired vision. During training the instructor should shout out "**SUBSTITUTE**". On hearing this, the Assistant Referee should make the signal, gain the attention of the center Referee (The instructor) and then sprint to the halfway line.

Setting up the training: (is easy!)

To set up this training, the instructor (or an individual if no instructor is available) will need to find a maximum 60-meter long area. If a field of play touchline is not available put a marker (a coat or a cone etc.) at each end of a 60-metre line. (You do not necessarily need a line.) Decide which end is the halfway line, and which is the corner flag end of the field of play. (The distance between the markers can be adjusted downwards, but should not be any longer than 60 meters.)

The time that the training takes is entirely up to you. You can make it as long or as short or as complex as you like.

The aim is to firstly ensure that the Assistant Referees know the proper flag signals, and then get them to demonstrate their knowledge by running 'up and down' to your instructions. Two important things to remember: Firstly, the flag must always be in the hand that is nearest to the touchline. This way, the center Referee always has clear view (line of sight) of the unfurled flag. Secondly, when running, the flag should be kept pointing downwards, and not pumped up and down like a steam train as you run along. The instructor should stand inside the field of play (if this is available) facing the Assistant Referees, and will assume the role of the center Referee. To begin the training, a gentle warm-up period of jogging and sprinting and pausing is recommended: For example, to begin the training, the instructor shouts combinations of **"RUN LEFT": "RUN RIGHT": "JOG LEFT": "JOG RIGHT": "SPRINT LEFT": "SPRINT RIGHT": "PAUSE":** etc.

Once the warm-up period has been completed, the instructor can use a varied combination of all the 'Shouts' below:

"CORNER": "GOAL KICK": "ATTENTION REFEREE": "THROW-IN RIGHT": "THROW-IN LEFT": "CRAB LEFT ": "CRAB RIGHT ": "RUN LEFT": "RUN RIGHT": "JOG LEFT": "JOG RIGHT": "SPRINT LEFT": "SPRINT RIGHT": PAUSE" "OFFSIDE": "OFFSIDE FAR": "OFFSIDE CENTRE": "OFFSIDE NEAR": "SUBSTITUTE"

Flag Tips:

1. When standing at the halfway line, and when play is in the other half of the field of play, Assistant Referees should always hold their flag in the hand that is nearest to the halfway line. This ensures that when play breaks back into their half, the Assistant Referee (when he turns to run down towards the corner flag) will already have the flag in the correct hand facing inwards towards the center Referee.
2. Never roll the flag up. Always have it unfurled, with as much of the flag's surface area visible to the center Referee. Keep the flag as motionless as possible whilst running.
3. When making the 'substitution' flag signal, do not hold it in front of your face. If you do, you may miss an incident. Hold it slightly to one side of the face to allow you visibility.
4. When signaling for a goal kick (or a corner kick), hold the flag in the hand that is nearest to the goal line. This will prevent you obscuring the center Referee from your vision and will open up your body position so that you are correctly facing towards the field of play. This will also give a greater eye contact line with the center Referee.
5. When signaling for a throw-in, use the correct hand. If the throw-in is to the right, use the right hand. If the throw-in is to the left, use the left hand. DO NOT use the right hand to indicate a throw-into the left, and do not use the left hand to indicate a throw-in to the right. In other words, do not cross your flag arm across your chest, or turn your body unnecessarily when making signals.
6. Always hold the flag in the hand that is nearest to the field of play. This will enable the center Referee to view it easier. Whilst switching hands, keep your hands low.
7. When signaling, stop, face the field of play, stand erect and try to locate and make eye contact with the center Referee.
8. If the center Referee acknowledges the flag, drop it immediately and continue to move with the ensuing game.
9. Be sharp with the flag when you are raising it. When you bring it down, do it gracefully!
10. Assistant Referees must learn the correct flag signals, and use them properly!