

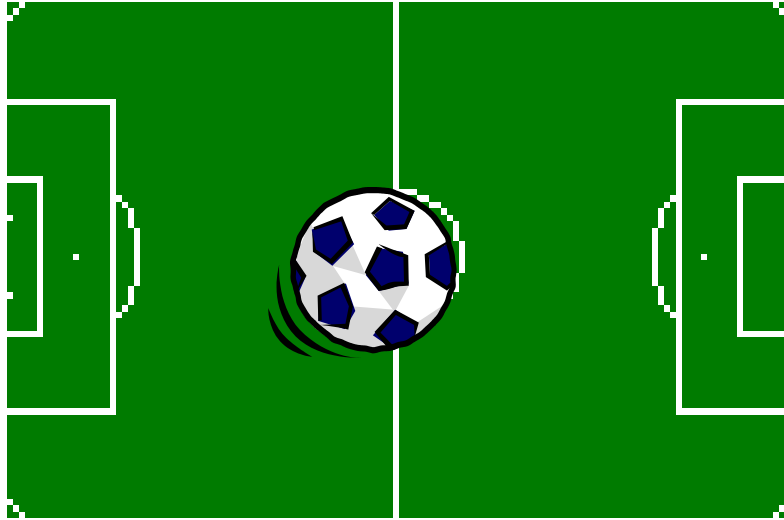
# Sports Rules



# Handbook

**Soccer**

# SOCCER



*The soccer field( pitch)*

## OVERVIEW

### Objective

Two teams of 11 players. Players attempt to score goals by kicking the ball in between the opposing teams goalposts. They can run with the ball, kick it, or hit it, but using the hands or arms to control the ball is not allowed. Games last for two 45 minute halves.

Players will pass (kick) the ball to each other, trying to outmaneuver the opposing team. Players may also tackle opposing team-members by trying to get the ball, using feet only. Football is a truly world wide game. In some countries, it is known as soccer. In most countries the game is called football, and it is the national sport of many of those countries.

Football is played on a large field called a pitch, presided over by a referee, and assistants. See Officials section for details.

The winning team is the team with the most goals at the end of the match. If the teams are equal on goals scored, a draw is declared. This applies in domestic football, and some international and competition fixtures.

## THE HISTORY OF SOCCER

Soccer often claims to be the most popular sport in the world. It has a rich and lengthy history. Soccer in various forms had been played through-out the world long before the nineteenth-century. In North America it had been popular among native peoples before the Europeans arrived, and it maintained this popularity as the Europeans brought their village games with them to the New World. "Soccer", or association football, from which the name *soccer* was later derived by Americans.

In reality there was no first game of soccer, for its origins go back to the beginning of recorded history: in pre-industrial societies it was often a "mob" game of village against village, lacking written rules and celebrated as part of a fertility rite or to mark particular seasons of the year; more sophisticated kicking games were to be found in societies as diverse as ancient China (which boasts the oldest rules resembling today's games).

As Britain changed from an agrarian to an industrial society beginning about 1750, soccer was adapted to fit suit the narrow streets and hard surfaces of the new urban communities. Improvements in roads and transportation allowed games to be played outside the local village, and as steam trains started to link the ever-growing towns of Britain, it became possible to play on a national basis the games that the middle class favored and promoted.

Players in Scotland changed the nature of soccer by adopting the passing game instead of the dribbling game. The strategy had been to get behind the man with the ball and rush forward in a mighty mass, with the hope of forcing the ball through the goal. The Scots kept more players in defense, spread their players rather than rely on a kick and run to catch up with the ball style.

The FA Cup became the premier competition for teams in Great Britain. While the FA Cup was the main competition, the Football League was formed. Based on the English County Cricket competition, the league was made up of selected teams that agreed to play one another on set dates, on a home-and-away basis, and promised to field their strongest team to give the league matches preference over all others.

By the turn of the century England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales had their own national soccer organizations, with their own cup and league competitions. For a long time to come there was no country beyond the United Kingdom to offer them serious competition.

The Glasgow Battalion of the Boy's Brigade grew to provide what was claimed to be the biggest football league in the world, fielding 200 teams in the 1950s.

Many of the men who ran the FA and the Football League devoted themselves to what they took to be the good of the game with no thought of financial recompense, and they thought that the players should do much the same. Power, recognition, and perhaps a title were their reward.

In the United States, the American Football Association (AFA) was founded in 1884, and a short-lived professional league was introduced in 1894. In 1905, the first Intercollegiate Association Football League was founded. And by 1912 there were organized leagues in twelve states.

In the meantime soccer struck some roots elsewhere. On the West Coast the Greater Los Angeles Soccer League was set up in 1902, and a San Francisco league formed two years later. In the Midwest soccer had some hold in Chicago, Detroit, and above all, Saint Louis, which had established the curious distinction, one that it still retains, of being the home of native-born talent: the Kensington's of Saint Louis were founded in 1890 as the first all-U.S.-born team. In 1913, the United States was accepted into FIFA.

Soccer spread throughout Canada with the development of the railway. Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Toronto were the main soccer centers.

## International Soccer

In April 1901, the Yankees came to Scotland to play a match. Previous to this time, the Americans had beaten Australians and Canadians, and were thought to be invincible. They had also beaten Englishmen the previous year in New York. The Scots tied and then went on to score two more goals.

It was the countries closest to Britain in commercial, economic, educational, or moral terms that first took to soccer: Argentina and Uruguay in South America and Switzerland and Denmark in Europe, followed by Belgium, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, Germany, and France. In view of their later success, Brazil, Italy, and Spain were comparatively tardy in taking up the association game.

The Latin countries that were later to lead the world in soccer made little impact on the game before 1914. The game came early to Britain's oldest ally, Portugal, where it was played by university students as early as 1866. The first team, Lisbon FC, was founded in 1875, and in the 1890s the Portuguese themselves, particularly students who had been to Britain, formed their own teams. Soccer was played in Spain in the 1890s

In Europe a controlling body for soccer was established in 1904. Europeans went ahead to found the Federation International of Football Association Football (FIFA). The aim of the body, free from any "European" qualifier, was to resolve disputes within nations concerning the authority of national federations or associations and to organize regular international competitions. Seven nations were represented in Paris in May 1904, but this had to grow to twenty-four by 1914, by which time Argentina, Chile, the United States, and South Africa had joined, giving the new body a world dimension.

The sport of soccer continues to grow in popularity. Today the FIFA ranks over 200 men's teams and over 60 women's teams in their yearly world rankings. Every four years, 64 teams vie for the World Cup, the largest single sporting event in the world.

## The Development Women's Soccer

The soccer craze in the postwar years extended to women, and it brought them to traditionally male leisure pursuits on an unprecedented scale. After the war, teams of young English and French women in particular played before sellout crowds. In the early days women had been encouraged to come to soccer matches to help to tone down the rougher aspects of male behavior.

The women's game got into full swing in 1917, when the engineering firm of Dick, Kerr founded a women's team in Preston. In their time out from making the weapons of war to send to the boys at the front, Dick, Kerr's ladies established themselves as a formidable soccer team. Other employers as well encouraged women to form teams, and the public flocked to their matches, in such numbers that only League grounds were big enough to hold them.

In France the first serious women's soccer teams were formed during the war. A French women's soccer team toured England in 1920 and again in 1921. In 1920, at Pershing Stadium in Paris, 10,000 spectators saw the French women draw with the English, 1-1. In England the FA placed a ban on women's soccer in December 1921, declaring the game to be "unsuitable" for women and their participation "not to be encouraged", despite the fact that these games raised an immense amount of money for charity.

## BASIC RULES

The game is started when the ball is placed on the centre spot and kicked by a player from the team taking the kick off. The player who takes the first kick must not touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player from either side.

The ball must travel forward from the kick off. No player from the opposing team may be within 9.15 metres (10 yards) of the ball when it is kicked off. They must be in their half of the field, and outside the centre circle (which has a 9.15 metre radius). A goal cannot be scored from the kick off.

Play is restarted with a kick from the centre after a goal is scored (by the non-scoring team), and at the start of the second half, when the team which did not kick off to begin the game take the first kick of the second half.

When the game clock starts, it stops only if the ball goes out of play, a refereeing decision, or if a goal is scored. It is worth noting that goalkeepers can score goals the same ways as any other player.

The game can flow evenly, with the ball being passed (kicked) between players, who try to get it up the field and into the opponent's net. The ball must completely cross the goal line to count as a goal. On the line does not count as a goal, although the lines around the pitch count as the playing area, so a ball on the lines is not out of play.

More likely, one or more of the following will happen over the course of a game.

## Offside

A player is declared offside (by the line official raising a flag) if they are closer to the opponents goal line than the ball is. Unless:

- The player is in their own half (in this case, offside does not apply)
- At least two opponents are *as near or nearer* to their own goal line

If a player is offside, the referee will only take action if:

- The player is interfering with play or with an opponent
- The player could gain a play advantage by being in an offside position

A player is *not* offside if:

- They are in an offside position, but not taking part in play (for example, not getting the ball or attempting to go for it)
- The player in an offside position is receiving a ball *directly* from a goal kick, free kick, or throw in

If a player is onside when the ball is played to them, but in an offside position when they actually receive it, they are not offside. In short, the player must be onside *at the moment the ball is played*, not when they receive it.

This rule is to prevent players waiting by the opposing goal just to knock the ball in. It also prevents games from just being contests where the ball is consistently banged from one end of the pitch to the other.

## PLAYING THE BALL

### Throw in

The throw in is used to restart play when the ball has left the field across one of the side lines (touch lines). A member of the team which was not the last to touch the ball takes the throw in.

*For example, if a player from Team A was the last to touch the ball (even by accident) then a player from Team B will take the throw in.*

The player taking the throw in must be as close to the point where the ball left the pitch as possible. The ball is held in both hands and is thrown from behind and over the head. The player must face the pitch and have both feet on or behind the touch line when the ball is thrown.

Goals cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.

### Corner kicks

If any member of the defending team is the last to touch the ball before it goes over the goal line (shorter sides of the field either side of the goals), a corner is awarded to the other team.

A quarter-circle of 1 metre (1 yard) in radius is at each corner of the pitch, and it is in here that the ball is placed before the corner is taken. Players on the defending team must not be within 9.15 metres (10 yards) of the corner area before the kick is taken.

A member of the attacking team kicks the ball into play. A goal scored directly from a corner kick is valid.

### Goal kick

The goal kick is used to restart play after the ball has crossed the goal line, and the last player to touch it was on the attacking team. The goalkeeper of the defending side kicks the ball out from the half of the goal area closest to where the ball left play.

The ball is not considered to be in play until it has left the penalty area. Goals cannot be scored from a goal kick, although goalkeepers can score goals the same way as any other player.

## Free kick

Free kicks are awarded to a team when the opposing team has infringed the rules in some way.

Free kicks can be direct or indirect. Goals can be scored from direct free kicks. Goals cannot be scored from an indirect free kick. For both types, the player who takes the kick may not touch the ball again until another player on either side has touched it. Own goals cannot be scored from a free kick.

All free kicks are taken from the point where the offence occurred. The player who takes the kick does not have to be the one who was fouled. The defending players must be at least 9.15 metres (10 yards) from the ball when it is kicked. The side taking the kick can ignore the distance if they feel they can gain an advantage.

In all cases, the referee may simply allow play to continue if the non-offending side have or could gain an advantage by doing so.

## Dropped ball

When play is stopped for reasons other than a deliberate infringement of the rules, for example, an injury, the referee will restart play by dropping the ball at the place it was when play was stopped. The ball is in play as soon as it touches the ground. No player can touch it until then.

One player from each team stands on either side of the referee when the ball is dropped, and both try to get possession once it has hit the ground. Other players do not have to be 9.15 metres (10 yards) away.

## Penalty kick

If a serious offence is committed by a defending player in their own penalty area, a penalty may be awarded. This means that the ball is placed on the penalty spot and a player from the non-offending team can have a free kick to score a goal.

The only two players allowed in the penalty area until the ball has been kicked are the goalkeeper and the player taking the penalty. The goalkeeper must be on the line and must not move forward until the goal has been kicked, although they can move laterally (from side to side).

If the attacking side infringes any rules (*for example, a non-kicking player enters the penalty area*), the kick will be retaken if the penalty is scored. If the defending team infringe the rules, or both teams infringe at the same time, the kick is retaken whether it is scored or not.

A goal scored after a penalty kick has rebounded off the post does not count in international football. Different leagues may have variation where rebounded balls can be scored.



## **WHY WOULD A DIRECT FREE KICK BE AWARDED?**

There are nine main offences.

- kicking or attempting to kick an opponent.
- tripping or throwing an opponent.
- jumping at an opponent.
- charging an opponent from behind.
- striking or attempting to strike an opponent.
- holding an opponent.
- pushing an opponent.
- charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner.
- handling the ball deliberately.

Ball handling counts as carrying, striking, or propelling the ball with the hand or arm. The goalkeeper can handle the ball, but only in the penalty area.

If a player accidentally handles the ball or is struck on the hand or arm, and the referee decides that the player could not have avoided it, no foul is given.

If any of the above offences occur in the penalty area, a penalty kick may be awarded to the other team.

## **WHY WOULD AN INDIRECT FREE KICK BE AWARDED?**

There are seven game situations that will result in an indirect free kick

- dangerous (not violent) play.
- charging fairly - but when the opponent does not have or is unable to play the ball.
- obstruction.
- charging the goalkeeper, except when the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball, or is outside the goal area.
- time-wasting.
- (goalkeeper) the ball must be released into play within six seconds of gaining possession.
- a player taking part in play is offside.

## THE USE OF CARDS

The referee can take further action against a player rather than a team. Yellow and red cards are used. Two yellow cards in one match or one red card mean that player is dismissed from the game and must leave the field immediately, and take no further part in the game. The side must then play on with one player less.

A player can receive a card for any of the following

- Entering or leaving the field of play without the referee's permission.
- persistent infringements of the rules.
- dissent - verbal or physical disagreement with any official.
- unsporting behavior.
- any offence as outlined above for free kicks.

After a card has been shown to a player, play is restarted with a free kick.

## PLAYER POSITIONS

The standard numbering system for shirts is as follows:

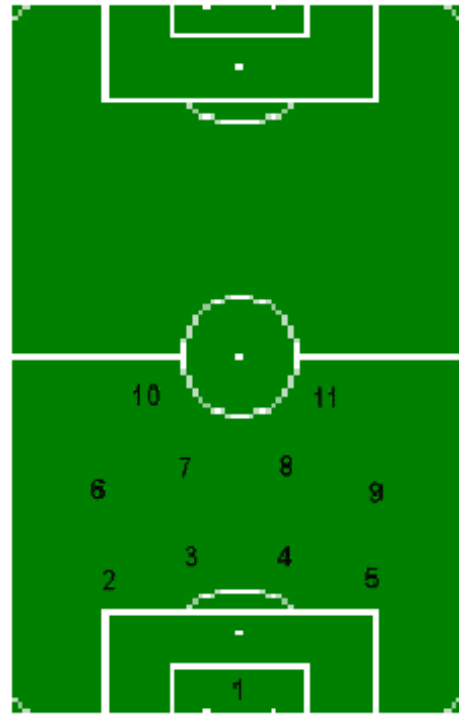
- 1** - Goalkeeper
- 2 and 5** Full back/Sweeper/Stopper (defender)
- 3 and 4** - Midfielder/defender
- 6 and 9** - Midfielder
- 7 and 8** – Central Midfielders/Links
- 10 and 11** Forward/Striker
- 12 upwards** – substitutes

Playing formations are numbered according to how many players are in each position from back to front.

The goalkeeper is always in goal so is not counted.

The 4-4-2 formation consists of four in defense, four in midfield, and two strikers.

The 4-3-3 formation consists of four in defense, and two players in midfield and defense, and often the other two players will move between midfield and attacking positions.



There are many formations and strategies, on which a specific football site would have more information.

## OFFICIALS

### Referee

The referee is neutral, and has full authority on the field. The referee makes all disciplinary decisions and keeps the time of the game. The referee can over-rule any decision of the line officials.

### Referee Assistants/Linesmen

There are two line officials, one on each touchline at opposite ends of the pitch. They are neutral, and are qualified referees in their own right. They assist the referee in making decisions, such as whether a ball has gone out for a corner kick, goal kick, or throw in, offside, and so on.

## EQUIPMENT

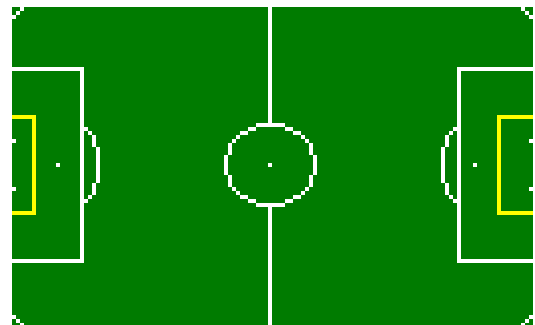
### The pitch

The playing surface is usually grass, but it can be an artificial surface. The pitch dimensions are between 90 and 120 metres (100 and 130 yards) long and 45 to 90 metres (50 to 100 yards) wide. The length must always exceed the width - no square pitches!

### Goal area

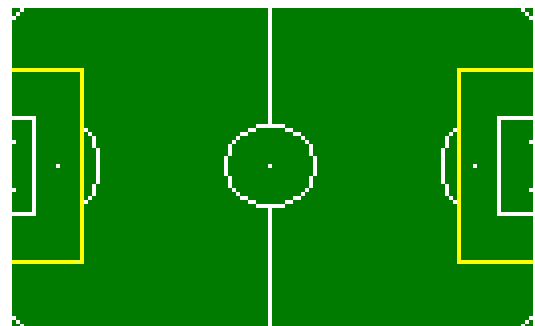
The goal area is enclosed within the penalty area. The penalty area extends 16.5 metres (18 yards) forward from the goal. The width of the goal area is 18 metres (20 yards).

The goals are positioned in the centre of the goal line. A rectangle extends forward from the goal 5.5 metres (6 yards). This is called the goal area (marked in yellow on the diagram).



### Penalty area

The penalty spot is marked 11 metres (12 yards) from the goal line, central to the goal. The arc which follows the penalty area has a radius of 9.15 metres (10 yards). The width of the penalty area is 40 metres (44 yards). (marked in yellow on the diagram).



Flags are placed on all four corners to help the officials determine when a ball goes out of bounds.

## Ball

The ball is round and made of leather or synthetic substances. Its circumference should be between 68 and 71 centimetres (27 to 28 inches), and should weigh between 396 and 453 grams (14 and 16 ounces).

## Goals

Each goal consists of two upright posts placed 7.32 metres (8 yards) apart, and joined by a crossbar at a height of 2.44 metres (8 feet). The posts and crossbar are usually white and made of wood or tubular metal. They are no more than 12 centimetres (5 inches) wide. A net is fixed to the back of the goal.

## GLOSSARY

**Advantage** – occurs when the referee allows play to continue after a foul if the non-offending team could benefit more than if play is stopped.

**Bicycle kick** - when a player kicks the ball over their shoulder, they often fall backwards as they kick, and their legs go up in the air in a cycling motion

**Booking / Caution** - when a player receives a first yellow card.

**Chip** - a kick with backspin that goes up and down quickly.

**Covering** - to be marked, or watched closely by a defender.

**Cross** - kicking a ball towards the penalty area from the touch lines.

**Dead ball** - when the ball is motionless (free kick, penalty) - this does not mean out of play.

**Far post** - goal post furthest from the ball.

**Flat back four** - a set four players in defense.

**Near post** - goal post nearest the ball.

**Nutmeg** - when a player kicks the ball between the legs of the opposing player in front of them to continue their own play.

**Offside trap** - when defensive players will move back to 'trap' an attacking player with the ball in an offside position, therefore making them offside.

**Overlapping** - when players move position to support other areas of the team during play.  
**Own goal** - when a player puts the ball into their own team's net. It counts as a goal for the other team.

**Running off the ball** - running into position to collect the ball when it is passed.

**Set piece** - a pre-determined action or set of actions (corner, free kick).

**Square pass** - a lateral (straight) pass made across the width of the field.

**Sweeper** - when a defensive player plays behind the other defenders, 'sweeping' from one side to the other.

**Tactical foul** - a deliberate foul to gain an advantage or to prevent a scoring opportunity.

**Through ball** - a pass made through the defense to an attacker.