

Vijay Asthana

Know
all about

GAMES & SPORTS



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&
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Football

Introduction to Football

A player (wearing the red kit) has penetrated the defence (in the white kit) and is taking a shot at goal. The goalkeeper will attempt to stop the ball from crossing the goal line. Association football, commonly known as football or soccer, is a team sport played between two teams of eleven players, and it is the most popular sport in the world. It is a ball game played on a rectangular grass or artificial turf field, with a goal at each of the short ends.

The object of the game is to score by manoeuvring the ball into the opposing goal. In general play, the goalkeeper is the only player allowed to use their hands or arms to propel the ball; the rest of the team usually use their feet to kick the ball into position, occasionally using their torso or head to intercept a ball in mid air. The team that scores the most goals by the end of the match wins. If the score is tied at the end of the game, either a draw is declared or the game goes into extra time and/or a penalty shootout, depending on the format of the competition.

The modern game was codified in England following the formation of The Football Association, whose 1863 Laws of the Game created the foundations for the way the sport is played today. Football is governed internationally by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (International Federation of Association Football), commonly known by the acronym FIFA. The most prestigious international football competition is the World Cup, held every four years.

This event, the most widely viewed in the world, boasts an audience twice that of the Summer Olympics. Football is played in accordance with a set of rules known as the Laws of the Game. The game is played using a single round ball, known as the football. Two teams of eleven players each compete to get the ball into the other team's goal (between the posts and under the bar), thereby scoring a goal.

The team that has scored more goals at the end of the game is the winner; if both teams have scored an equal number of goals then the game is a draw. The primary rule is that players (other than goalkeepers) may not deliberately handle the ball with their hands or arms during play (though they do use their hands during a throw-in restart). Although players usually use their feet to move the ball around, they may use any part of their bodies other than their hands or arms.

In typical game play, players attempt to create goal scoring opportunities through individual control of the ball, such as by dribbling, passing the ball to a team-mate, and by taking shots at the goal, which is guarded by the opposing goalkeeper. Opposing players may try to regain control of the ball by intercepting a pass or through tackling the opponent in possession of the ball; however, physical contact between opponents is restricted. Football is generally a free-flowing game, with play stopping only when the ball has left the field of play or when play is stopped by the referee. After a stoppage, play recommences with a specified restart.

At a professional level, most matches produce only a few goals. For example, the 2005–06 season of the English Premier League produced an average of 2.48 goals per match. The Laws of the Game do not specify any player positions other than goalkeeper, but a number of specialised roles have evolved. Broadly, these include three main categories: strikers, or forwards, whose main task is to score goals; defenders, who specialise in preventing their opponents from scoring; and midfielders, who dispossess the opposition and keep possession of the ball in order to pass it to the forwards.

Players in these positions are referred to as outfield players, in order to discern them from the single goalkeeper. These positions are further subdivided according to the area of the field in which the player spends most time. For example, there are central defenders, and left and right midfielders. The ten outfield players may be arranged in any combination.

The number of players in each position determines the style of the team's play; more forwards and fewer defenders creates a more aggressive and offensive-minded game, while the reverse creates a slower, more defensive style of play. While players typically spend most of the game in a specific position, there are few restrictions on player movement, and players can switch positions at any time. The layout of a team's players is known as a formation. Defining the team's formation and tactics is usually the prerogative of the team's manager.

Map showing the popularity of football around the world. Countries where football is the most popular sport are coloured green, while countries where it is not are coloured red. The various shades of green and red indicate the number of players per 1,000 inhabitants. Games revolving around the kicking of a ball have been played in many countries throughout history. According to FIFA, the "very earliest form of the game for which there is scientific evidence was an exercise of precisely this skilful technique dating back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries BC in China (the game of cuju)."

In addition, the Roman game harpastum may be a distant ancestor of football. Various forms of football were played in medieval Europe, though rules varied greatly by both period and location. The modern rules of football are based on the mid-19th century efforts to standardise the widely varying forms of football played at the public schools of England. The Cambridge Rules, first drawn up at Cambridge University in 1848, were particularly influential in the development of subsequent codes, including Association football.

The Cambridge Rules were written at Trinity College, Cambridge, at a meeting attended by representatives from Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Winchester and Shrewsbury schools. They were not universally adopted. During the 1850s, many clubs unconnected to schools or universities were formed throughout the English-speaking world, to play various forms of football. Some came up with their own distinct codes of rules, most notably the Sheffield Football Club, formed by former public school pupils in 1857, which led to formation of a Sheffield FA in 1867. In 1862, John Charles Thring of Uppingham School also devised an influential set of rules.

These ongoing efforts contributed to the formation of The Football Association (The FA) in 1863, which first met on the morning of 26 October 1863 at the Freemason's Tavern in Great Queen Street, London. The only school to be represented on this occasion was Charterhouse. The Freemason's Tavern was the setting for five more meetings between October and December, which eventually produced the first comprehensive set of rules. At the final meeting, the first FA treasurer, the representative from Blackheath, withdrew his club from the FA over the removal of two draft rules at the previous meeting, the first which allowed for the running with the ball in hand and the second, obstructing such a run by hacking (kicking an opponent in the shins), tripping and holding.

Other English rugby football clubs followed this lead and did not join the FA, or subsequently left the FA and instead in 1871 formed the Rugby Football Union. The eleven remaining clubs, under the charge of Ebenezer Cobb Morley, went on to ratify the original thirteen laws of the game. These rules included handling of the ball by "marks" and the lack of a crossbar, rules which made it remarkably similar to Victorian rules football being developed at that time in Australia. The Sheffield FA played by its own rules until the 1870s with the FA absorbing some of its rules until there was little difference between the games.

The laws of the game are currently determined by the

International Football Association Board (IFAB). The Board was formed in 1886 after a meeting in Manchester of The Football Association, the Scottish Football Association, the Football Association of Wales, and the Irish Football Association. The world's oldest football competition is the FA Cup, which was founded by C. W. Alcock and has been contested by English teams since 1872. The first official international football match took place in 1872 between Scotland and England in Glasgow, again at the instigation of C. W. Alcock. England is home to the world's first football league, which was founded in 1888 by Aston Villa director William McGregor.

The original format contained 12 clubs from the Midlands and the North of England. The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the international football body, was formed in Paris in 1904 and declared that they would adhere to Laws of the Game of the Football Association. The growing popularity of the international game led to the admittance of FIFA representatives to the International Football Association Board in 1913. The board currently consists of four representatives from FIFA and one representative from each of the four British associations.

Today, football is played at a professional level all over the world. Millions of people regularly go to football stadiums to follow their favourite teams, while billions more watch the game on television. A very large number of people also play football at an amateur level. According to a survey conducted by FIFA published in 2001, over 240 million people from more than 200 countries regularly play football. Its simple rules and minimal equipment requirements have no doubt aided its spread and growth in popularity.

In many parts of the world football evokes great passions and plays an important role in the life of individual fans, local communities, and even nations; it is therefore often claimed to be the most popular sport in the world. ESPN has spread the claim that the Côte d'Ivoire national football team helped secure a truce to the

nation's civil war in 2005. By contrast, football is widely considered to be the final proximate cause in the Football War in June 1969 between El Salvador and Honduras. The sport also exacerbated tensions at the beginning of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, when a match between Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade devolved into rioting in March 1990.

Laws of the game

There are seventeen laws in the official Laws of the Game. The same Laws are designed to apply to all levels of football, although certain modifications for groups such as juniors, seniors or women are permitted. The laws are often framed in broad terms, which allow flexibility in their application depending on the nature of the game. In addition to the seventeen laws, numerous IFAB decisions and other directives contribute to the regulation of football. The Laws of the Game are published by FIFA, but are maintained by the International Football Association Board, not FIFA itself.

Each team consists of a maximum of eleven players (excluding substitutes), one of whom must be the goalkeeper. Competition rules may state a minimum number of players required to constitute a team; this is usually seven. Goalkeepers are the only players allowed to play the ball with their hands or arms, provided they do so within the penalty area in front of their own goal. Though there are a variety of positions in which the outfield (non-goalkeeper) players are strategically placed by a coach, these positions are not defined or required by the Laws.

The basic equipment or kit players are required to wear includes a shirt, shorts, socks, footwear and adequate shin guards. Players are forbidden to wear or use anything that is dangerous to themselves or another player, such as jewellery or watches. The goalkeeper must wear clothing that is easily distinguishable from that worn by the other players and the match officials.

A number of players may be replaced by substitutes during the course of the game. The maximum number of substitutions permitted in most competitive international and domestic league games is three, though the permitted number may vary in other competitions or in friendly matches. Common reasons for a substitution include injury, tiredness, ineffectiveness, a tactical switch, or timewasting at the end of a finely poised game. In standard adult matches, a player who has been substituted may not take further part in a match.

A game is officiated by a referee, who has "full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match to which he has been appointed" (Law 5), and whose decisions are final. The referee is assisted by two assistant referees. In many high-level games there is also a fourth official who assists the referee and may replace another official should the need arise.

Pitch

As the Laws were formulated in England, and were initially administered solely by the four British football associations within IFAB, the standard dimensions of a football pitch were originally expressed in imperial units. The Laws now express dimensions with approximate metric equivalents (followed by traditional units in brackets), though popular use tends to continue to use traditional units in English-speaking countries with a relatively recent history of metrification, such as Britain.

The length of the pitch for international adult matches is in the range 100–110 metres (110–120 yd) and the width is in the range 64–75 metres (70–80 yd). Fields for non-international matches may be 100–130 yards (120 m) length and 50–100 yards (91 m) in width, provided that the pitch does not become square. The longer boundary lines are touchlines or sidelines, while the shorter boundaries (on which the goals are placed) are goal lines. A rectangular goal is positioned at the middle of each goal line. The

inner edges of the vertical goal posts must be 8 yards (7.3 m) apart, and the lower edge of the horizontal crossbar supported by the goal posts must be 8 feet (2.44 m) above the ground. Nets are usually placed behind the goal, but are not required by the Laws.

In front of each goal is an area known as the penalty area (colloquially "18-yard (16 m) box" or simply "the box" or "the area"). This area is marked by the goal line, two lines starting on the goal line 18 yards (16.5 m) from the goalposts and extending 18 yards (16.5 m) into the pitch perpendicular to the goal-line, and a line joining them. This area has a number of functions, the most prominent being to mark where the goalkeeper may handle the ball and where a penal foul by a member of the defending team becomes punishable by a penalty kick. Other markings define the position of the ball or players at kick-offs, goal kicks, penalty kicks and corner kicks.

Duration and tie-breaking

A standard adult football match consists of two periods of 45 minutes each, known as halves. Each half runs continuously, meaning that the clock is not stopped when the ball is out of play. There is usually a 15-minute "half-time" break between halves. The end of the match is known as full-time.

The referee is the official timekeeper for the match, and may make an allowance for time lost through substitutions, injured players requiring attention, or other stoppages. This added time is commonly referred to as stoppage time or injury time, and is at the sole discretion of the referee. The referee alone signals the end of the match. In matches where a fourth official is appointed, toward the end of the half the referee signals how many minutes of stoppage time he intends to add. The fourth official then informs the players and spectators by holding up a board showing this number. The signalled stoppage time may be further extended by the referee.

In league competitions, games may end in a draw, but in some knockout competitions if a game is tied at the end of regulation

time it may go into extra time, which consists of two further 15-minute periods. If the score is still tied after extra time, some competitions allow the use of penalty shootouts (known officially in the Laws of the Game as "kicks from the penalty mark") to determine which team will progress to the next stage of the tournament. Goals scored during extra time periods count toward the final score of the game, but kicks from the penalty mark are only used to decide the team that progresses to the next part of the tournament (with goals scored in a penalty shootout not making up part of the final score).

Competitions held over two legs (in which each team plays at home once) may use the away goals rule to determine which team progresses in the event of equal aggregate scores. If the result is still equal, kicks from the penalty mark are usually required, though some competitions may require a tied game to be replayed. In the late 1990s, the IFAB experimented with ways of creating a winner without requiring a penalty shootout, which was often seen as an undesirable way to end a match.

These involved rules ending a game in extra time early, either when the first goal in extra time was scored (golden goal), or if one team held a lead at the end of the first period of extra time (silver goal). Golden goal was used at the World Cup in 1998 and 2002. The first World Cup game decided by a golden goal was France's victory over Paraguay in 1998. Germany was the first nation to score a golden goal in a major competition, beating Czech Republic in the final of Euro 1996. Silver goal was used in Euro 2004. Both these experiments have been discontinued by IFAB.

Under the Laws, the two basic states of play during a game are ball in play and ball out of play. From the beginning of each playing period with a kick-off (a set kick from the centre-spot by one team) until the end of the playing period, the ball is in play at all times, except when either the ball leaves the field of play, or play is stopped by the referee. When the ball becomes out of play, play is restarted by one of eight restart methods depending

on how it went out of play:

- Kick-off: following a goal by the opposing team, or to begin each period of play.
- Throw-in: when the ball has wholly crossed the touchline; awarded to opposing team to that which last touched the ball.
- Goal kick: when the ball has wholly crossed the goal line without a goal having been scored and having last been touched by an attacker; awarded to defending team.
- Corner kick: when the ball has wholly crossed the goal line without a goal having been scored and having last been touched by a defender; awarded to attacking team.
- Indirect free kick: awarded to the opposing team following "non-penal" fouls, certain technical infringements, or when play is stopped to caution or send-off an opponent without a specific foul having occurred. A goal may not be scored directly from an indirect free kick.
- Direct free kick: awarded to fouled team following certain listed "penal" fouls.
- Penalty kick: awarded to the fouled team following a foul usually punishable by a direct free kick but that has occurred within their opponent's penalty area.
- Dropped-ball: occurs when the referee has stopped play for any other reason, such as a serious injury to a player, interference by an external party, or a ball becoming defective. This restart is uncommon in adult games.

Fouls and misconduct

A foul occurs when a player commits an offence listed in the Laws of the Game while the ball is in play. The offences that constitute a foul are listed in Law 12. Handling the ball deliberately, tripping an opponent, or pushing an opponent, are examples of

"penal fouls", punishable by a direct free kick or penalty kick depending on where the offence occurred. Other fouls are punishable by an indirect free kick.

The referee may punish a player or substitute's misconduct by a caution (yellow card) or sending-off (red card). A second yellow card at the same game leads to a red card, and therefore to a sending-off. If a player has been sent-off, no substitute can be brought on in their place. Misconduct may occur at any time, and while the offences that constitute misconduct are listed, the definitions are broad. In particular, the offence of "unsporting behaviour" may be used to deal with most events that violate the spirit of the game, even if they are not listed as specific offences.

A referee can show a yellow or red card to a player, substitute or substituted player. Non-players such as managers and support staff cannot be shown the yellow or red card, but may be expelled from the technical area if they fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Rather than stopping play, the referee may allow play to continue if doing so will benefit the team against which an offence has been committed. This is known as "playing an advantage".

The referee may "call back" play and penalise the original offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue within a short period, typically taken to be four to five seconds. Even if an offence is not penalised due to advantage being played, the offender may still be sanctioned for misconduct at the next stoppage of play. The most complex of the Laws is offside. The offside law limits the ability of attacking players to remain forward (i.e. closer to the opponent's goal-line) of the ball, the second-to-last defending player (which can include the goalkeeper), and the half-way line.

The recognised international governing body of football (and associated games, such as futsal and beach soccer) is the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). The FIFA headquarters are located in Zürich.

Six regional confederations are associated with FIFA; these are:

- Asia: Asian Football Confederation (AFC)
- Africa: Confederation of African Football (CAF)
- Central/North America & Caribbean: Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF; also known as The Football Confederation)
- Europe: Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)
- Oceania: Oceania Football Confederation (OFC)
- South America: Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol (South American Football Confederation: CONMEBOL)

National associations oversee football within individual countries. These are affiliated both with FIFA and with their respective continental confederations.

The major international competition in football is the World Cup, organised by FIFA. This competition takes place over a four-year period. More than 190 national teams compete in qualifying tournaments within the scope of continental confederations for a place in the finals. The finals tournament, which is held every four years, involves 32 national teams competing over a four-week period. The 2006 FIFA World Cup took place in Germany; in 2010 it will be held in South Africa.

There has been a football tournament at every Summer Olympic Games since 1900, except at the 1932 games in Los Angeles. Before the inception of the World Cup, the Olympics (especially during the 1920s) had the same status as the World Cup. Originally, the event was for amateurs only, however, since the 1984 Summer Olympics professional players have been permitted, albeit with certain restrictions which prevent countries from fielding their strongest sides. Currently, the Olympic men's tournament is played at Under-23 level.

In the past the Olympics have allowed a restricted number of over-age players per team; but that practice will cease in the 2008

Olympics. The Olympic competition is not generally considered to carry the same international significance and prestige as the World Cup. A women's tournament was added in 1996; in contrast to the men's event, full international sides without age restrictions play the women's Olympic tournament. It thus carries international prestige considered comparable to that of the FIFA Women's World Cup. After the World Cup, the most important football competitions are the continental championships, which are organised by each continental confederation and contested between national teams.

These are the European Championship (UEFA), the Copa América (CONMEBOL), African Cup of Nations (CAF), the Asian Cup (AFC), the CONCACAF Gold Cup (CONCACAF) and the OFC Nations Cup (OFC). The most prestigious competitions in club football are the respective continental championships, which are generally contested between national champions, for example the UEFA Champions League in Europe and the Copa Libertadores de América in South America. The winners of each continental competition contest the FIFA Club World Cup.

The governing bodies in each country operate league systems, normally comprising several divisions, in which the teams gain points throughout the season depending on results. Teams are placed into tables, placing them in order according to points accrued. Most commonly, each team plays every other team in its league at home and away in each season, in a round-robin tournament. At the end of a season, the top team are declared the champions.

The top few teams may be promoted to a higher division, and one or more of the teams finishing at the bottom are relegated to a lower division. The teams finishing at the top of a country's league may be eligible also to play in international club competitions in the following season. The main exceptions to this system occur in some Latin American leagues, which divide football championships into two sections named Apertura and Clausura, awarding a champion for each.

The majority of countries supplement the league system with one or more cup competitions. These are organised on a knock-out basis, the winner of each match proceeding to the next round; the loser takes no further part in the competition. Some countries' top divisions feature highly-paid star players; in smaller countries and lower divisions, players may be part-timers with a second job, or amateurs. The five top European leagues—the Premier League (England), the Bundesliga (Germany), La Liga (Spain), Ligue 1 (France) and Serie A (Italy)—attract most of the world's best players.

The rules of football were codified in England by the Football Association in 1863, and the name association football was coined to distinguish the game from the other forms of football played at the time, specifically rugby football. The term soccer originated in England, first appearing in the 1880s as a slang abbreviation of association football, often credited to former England captain, Charles Wreford-Brown. Today the sport is generally known simply as football in countries where it is the most popular football code.

In countries where other codes are more popular, the sport is more commonly referred to as soccer, and indeed is referred to as such in the official names of the governing bodies in the United States and Canada. FIFA, the sport's world governing body, defines the sport they govern as association football in their statutes, but the term most commonly used by FIFA and the International Olympic Committee is football.