

SOCCKER TERMINOLOGY

Advantage rule:

a clause in the rules that directs the referee to refrain from stopping play for a foul if a stoppage would benefit the team that committed the violation.

Advantages:

situations where a team has possession of the ball and outnumbered the opposition near the opposing goal.

Assist:

the pass or passes which immediately precede a goal; a maximum of two assists can be credited for one goal.

Attacker:

any player on the team that has possession of the ball.

Attacking team:

the team that has possession of the ball.

Back:

a defender.

Ball carrier:

a player that has possession of the ball.

Break:

when a team quickly advances the ball down the field in an attempt to get its players near the opponent's goal before the defenders have a chance to retreat; also called an advantage.

Breakaway:

when an attacker with the ball approaches the goal undefended; this exciting play pits a sole attacker against the goalkeeper in a one-on-one showdown.

Carrying the ball:

a foul called on a goalkeeper when he takes more than 4 steps while holding or bouncing the ball.

Caution:

see Yellow card.

Center Spot:

The exact middle of the field where a game begins and restarts after each goal.

Charge:

to run into an opponent; legal if done from the front or side of the ball carrier; illegal against a player without the ball or from behind.

Chest trap:

when a player uses his chest to slow down and control a ball in the air.

Chip pass:

a pass lofted into the air from a player to a teammate; used primarily to evade a defender by kicking the ball over his head.

Chip shot:

a kick lofted into the air to try to sail the ball over the goalkeeper's head and still make it under the crossbar into the goal.

Clear:

to kick the ball away from one's goal.

Corner kick:

a type of restart where the ball is kicked from the corner arc in an attempt to score; awarded to an attacking team when the ball crosses the goal line last touched by the defending team.

Cross or crossing pass:

a pass from an attacking player near the sideline to a teammate in the middle or opposite side of the field; used to give the teammate a good scoring opportunity.

Cut down the angle:

when the goalie comes out of the goal several feet to make himself closer and larger to an attacker, leaving the attacker less net to shoot at.

Cut off:

when a defensive player keeps his body between an attacker and the defender's goal, forcing the attacker out towards the sidelines.

Dangerous play:

when a player attempts a play that the referee considers dangerous to that player or others, such as trying to kick the ball out of the goalie's hands, even if no contact is made.

Defenders:

the players on the team that does not have possession of the ball.

Defending team:

the team that does not have possession of the ball.

Defense:

a team's function of preventing the opposition from scoring.

Defensemen:

the 3 or 4 players on a team whose primary task is to stop the opposition from scoring; also called fullbacks.

Direct free kick:

a kick awarded to a player for a serious foul committed by the opposition; the player kicks a stationary ball with no opposing players within 10 yards of him; a goal can be scored directly from this kick without the ball touching another player.

Dribbler:

a player who advances the ball while controlling it with his feet.

Dribbling:

the basic skill of advancing the ball with the feet while controlling it.

Drop ball:

a method of restarting a game where the referee drops the ball between 2 players facing each other.

Drop kick:

when a goalie drops the ball from his hands and kicks it just after it hits the ground.

FIFA:

Federation Internationale de Football Association — the official governing body of international soccer since 1904 which established the World Cup tournament; helps set and revise rules of the game, called the 17 Laws.

FIFA World Cup:

a solid gold statue given to the champion of each World Cup tournament to keep for the next 4 years.

Forwards:

the 3 or 4 players on a team who are responsible for most of a team's scoring; they play in front of the rest of their team where they can take most of its shots; strikers and wingers.

Foul:

a violation of the rules for which an official assesses a free kick.

Fullbacks:

see Defensemen.

Goal:

a ball that crosses the goal line between the goalposts and below the crossbar for which a point is awarded; also, the 8-foot high, 24-foot wide structure consisting of two posts, a crossbar and a net into which all goals are scored.

Goal area:

the rectangular area 20 yards wide by 6 yards deep in front of each goal from which all goal kicks are taken; inside this area, it is illegal for opposing players to charge a goalie not holding the ball.

Goal kick:

a type of restart where the ball is kicked from inside the goal area away from the goal; awarded to the defending team when a ball that crossed the goal line was last touched by a player on the attacking team.

Goal line:

the field boundary running along its width at each end; also called the end line; runs right across the front of the goal; the line which a ball must completely cross for a goal to be scored.

Goalkeeper:

the player positioned directly in front of the goal who tries to prevent shots from getting into the net behind him; the only player allowed to use his hands and arms, though only within the penalty area.

Hacking:

kicking an opponent's legs.

Halfback:

see Midfielder.

Hand ball:

a foul where a player touches the ball with his hand or arm; the opposing team is awarded a direct free kick.

Hat trick:

3 or more goals scored in a game by a single player.

Indirect free kick:

a kick awarded to a player for a less-serious foul committed by the opposition; the player kicks a stationary ball without any opposing players within 10 yards of him; a goal can only be scored on this kick after the ball has touched another player.

Juggling:

keeping a ball in the air with any part of the body besides the hands or arms; used for practice and developing coordination.

Kickoff:

the method of starting a game or restarting it after each goal; a player passes the ball forward to a teammate from the center spot. The first player touching the ball on a kickoff can only touch it once to start the play passing to their teammate, who then can touch it as much as needed.

Man-to-man:

a type of defense where each defender is assigned to mark a different forward from the other team; the most common type of defense for national-level teams.

Marking:

guarding a player to prevent him from advancing the ball towards the net, making an easy pass or getting the ball from a teammate.

Midfielders:

the 2, 3 or 4 players who link together the offensive and defensive functions of a team; they play behind their forwards.

Obstruction:

when a defensive player, instead of going after the ball, uses his body to prevent an offensive player from playing it.

Offense:

the function of trying to score goals.

Offensive player:

see Attacker.

Offensive team:

see Attacking team.

Offside:

a violation called when a player in an offside position receives a pass from a teammate; an indirect free kick is awarded to the non-offending team.

Offside position:

an attacking player positioned so that fewer than 2 opposing defensive players (usually the goalie and 1 other defender) are between him and the goal he is attacking; a player is not offside if he is exactly even with one or both of these defensive players.

Overlap:

when a winger moves away from the sideline towards the center of the field to create space for a teammate to advance the ball undefended along the side of the field.

Penalty:

short for penalty kick; also, a punishment given by the referee for a violation of the rules.

Penalty arc:

a circular arc whose center is the penalty spot and extends from the top of the penalty area; designates an area that opposing players are not allowed to enter prior to a penalty kick.

Penalty area:

a rectangular area 44 yards wide by 18 yards deep with its long edge on the goal line; the goalkeeper may use his hands to block or control the ball only within this area.

Penalty kick:

see Penalty shot.

Penalty shot:

a kick taken from the penalty spot by a player against the opposing goalie without any players closer than 10 yards away; awarded for the most severe rule violations and those committed by the defense within its own penalty area; also taken in a tiebreaker to decide a match.

Penalty spot:

the small circular spot located 12 yards in front of the center of the goal line from which all penalty kicks are taken; positioned at the center of the penalty arc.

Possession:

control of the ball.

Professional foul:

a foul committed intentionally, usually by a defender on an attacker just outside the defender's penalty area; used to prevent a scoring opportunity without incurring a penalty shot.

Red card:

a playing card-sized card that a referee holds up to signal a player's removal from the game; the player's team must play the rest of the game shorthanded; presented for violent behavior or multiple rule infractions (two yellow cards = one red card).

Screening:

see Shielding.

Set play:

a planned strategy that a team uses when a game is restarted with a free kick, penalty kick, corner kick, goal kick, throw-in or kickoff.

Shielding:

a technique used by a ball carrier to protect the ball from a defender closely marking him; the ball carrier keeps his body between the ball and the defender.

Shot:

a ball kicked or headed by a player at the opponent's net in an attempt to score a goal.

Shoulder charge:

minimal shoulder-to-shoulder contact by a defender against a ball carrier; the only contact allowed by the rules unless a defender touches the ball first.

Side tackle:

an attempt by a defender to redirect the ball slightly with his foot away from a ball carrier running in the same direction.

Sliding tackle:

an attempt by a defender to take the ball away from a ball carrier by sliding on the ground feet-first into the ball.

Square pass:

a pass made by a player to a teammate running alongside him.

Stopper:

the defender that marks the best scorer on the attacking team, often the opposition's striker; exists only in a man-to-man defense.

Striker:

a team's most powerful and best-scoring forward who plays towards the center of the field; also, the name of the mascot for the 1994 World Cup.

Sudden death:

a type of overtime where the first goal scored by a team ends the game and gives that team the victory; most overtime in soccer is not sudden death.

Sweeper:

the defender that plays closest to his own goal behind the rest of the defenders; a team's last line of defense in front of the goalkeeper.

Tackling:

the act of taking the ball away from a player by kicking or stopping it with one's feet; only a minimal amount of shoulder-to-shoulder contact, called a charge, is permitted to knock the ball carrier off balance.

Through pass:

a pass sent to a teammate to get him the ball behind his defender; used to penetrate a line of defenders.

Throw-in:

a type of restart where a player throws the ball from behind his head with two hands while standing with both feet on the ground behind a sideline; taken by a player opposite the team that last touched the ball before it went out of bounds across a sideline.

Trailing:

running behind another player.

Trap:

when a player uses his body to slow down and control a moving ball, most often using his chest, thighs or feet.

Turnover:

the loss of possession of the ball.

Two-way midfielder:

the versatile midfielder most responsible for organizing play in the midfield area; often a team's energetic leader.

Unsportsmanlike conduct:

rude behavior.

Volley:

any ball kicked by a player when it is off the ground.

Wall:

a line of 2 to 6 defending players pressed together shoulder-to-shoulder to protect their goal against a close free kick; creates a more difficult shot by reducing the amount of open goal area the kicker has to shoot at.

Wall pass:

a pass by a ball carrier who sends the ball to a teammate, then runs behind his own defender and quickly receives a pass back; used to get a player past his defender without having to dribble by him; same as the "give-and-go" in basketball.

Wings or wingers:

the outside forwards who play to the sides of the strikers and whose primary task is to provide them with accurate crossing passes so they can shoot at the goal; often the fastest players and best dribblers on a team.

Yellow card:

a playing card-sized card that a referee holds up to warn a player for dangerous or unsportsmanlike behavior; also called a caution; 2 yellow cards in one game earns a player an automatic red card, signaling his removal from the game.

Zone:

a type of defense that assigns each defender to a particular area in front of or around his team's goal in which he is responsible for marking any attacker that enters; often used in youth league games but rarely in professional competition.